

# **The Heritage Lodge**

## **No. 730, A.F.& A.M., G.R.C.**



**Instituted: September 21, 1977**  
**Constituted: September 23, 1978**

# **PROCEEDINGS**

**Vol. 14, 1990 - 1991**

**Worshipful Master:**

**V.W. Bro. Wilfred T. Greenhough**

**Editor:**

**R.W. Bro. Jacob (Jack) Pos**

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## THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER

### V.W. Bro. Wilfred T. Greenhough

Initiated Lebanon Forest Lodge NO. 133, Exeter, Ontario,	1952
Affiliated Zwiebrucken Lodge NO. 877 (R.C.A.F.), Germany,	1961
Installed as Worshipful Master of Zwiebrucken Lodge No. 877,	1964
Founding member of the American Canadian Provincial Grand Lodge.	
Affiliated St. John's Lodge No. 17, Cobourg, Honourary L. M.,	1965
Honourary Life Member Colborne Lodge No. 17,	1965
Installed as Worshipful Master of Colborne Lodge No. 17,	1988
Affiliated The Heritage Lodge No. 730, as Life Member,	1984
Jean Marie Raymond A.& A. S. R. (France), Lodge of Perfection	1964
LaFayette Chapter of Rose Croix,	1964
France American Consistory No. 1, Valley of Paris	1964
Affiliated Peterborough Lodge of Perfection,	1968
T.P.G.M. Peterborough Lodge of Perfection,	1987
Affiliated Peterborough Chapter Rose Croix,	1968
Affiliated Barrie Consistory, Barrie Valley,	1980
A.A.O.N.M.S., MOSLA Temple, Fort worth Texas,	
- Special Ambassador at Large,	1964

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Hiram Council No. 24, Royal and Select Masters (LM),	1981
- PTIM,	1990
Kawartha Lakes Lodge No. 21, Royal Ark Mariners,	1981
- PWCN,	1990
St. John's Chapter No. 48, Royal Arch Masons (LM),	1973
- Ex First Principal in 1978 and Grand Registrar,	1986
Palestine Preceptory No. 18, Sovereign Great Peiory (LM),	1973
- Perceptor,	1978
Emanuel Preceptory No. 83, Charter Life Member,	1983
Kawartha Council No. 143, Allied Masonic Degrees,	1984
- SM,	1989
3 Sovereign No. 210, Allied Masoniv Degrees,	1988
Quinte College No. 53, York Rite Colleges of North America,	1984
Southern California Research Lodge, SC,	1987

## *PREFACE*

In reveiwing the activities of the past year, I am heartened with the accomplishments and positive progress being made by the various active committees of the Lodge. Several of which were initiated by my predecessors and carried to successful completion by the Standing Committees of the Lodge.

Perhaps the most significant was the revision of the Lodge By-Laws under the Chairmanship of W. Bro. Donald Thornton and the 'Finance and By-Laws Committee'. Before these changes could be made, it was first necessary to amend the Constitution. Major changes concerning 'Research Lodges' were approved by Grand Lodge at the 135th Annual Communication held in Toronto, July 18, 1990.

Changes to our Lodge By-Laws have now been approved, and for the first time we will have available for distribution published copies of The Heritage Lodge By-Laws. The revised manuscript is currently in the hands of our Printer.

We were pleased once again to welcome R.W. Bro. Wallace McLeod, this time as Guest Speaker for the Seventh Annual Heritage Banquet, held in the York Banquet Hall, Toronto. His topic, "The Universality of Freemasonry" was most illuminating and enjoyed by all. This meeting also afforded us the opportunity to greet two special guests, Mrs Margaret Hesp and Mr. Russell Cooper, both

former members of the Black Creek Pioneer Village under the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservatio Authority. Appreciation was expressed to each for their very valuable assistance to The Heritage Lodge in the establishment of the 'Lodge Room' in the Black Creek Pioneer Village as a window into our masonic past.

I regret to announce that our Editor, R.W. Bro. Jack Pos has requested, positively, that the Lodge secure a replacement Editor. I therefore charge the current and incoming executive to find a candidate for the office of Editor. Anyone who may be interested should contact R.W. Bro. Frank Dunn.

In conclusion, I thank the members of The Heritage Lodge for giving me the honour of serving as the Worshipful Master.

Wilfred T. Greenhough, W.M.

## EDITORIAL COMMENTS

The first paper for this year, titled "York/Toronto on the Square", was presented by V.W. Bro. Walter P. Ford, who took us on a historical walk through the streets of the Town of York, City of Toronto, to find the locations of Lodges of yesteryear. The information was so inspiring that it prompted one of his reviewers to retrace those steps. Toronto masons will certainly appreciate this excursion into the past and be surprised to find a number of former Masonic meeting places still in existence.

The 'highlight' of our 7th Annual Heritage Banquet was the talk by R.W. Bro. Wallace McLeod titled 'The Universality of Freemasonry'. Bro. McLeod very effectively reminded us all of how Freemasonry was ahead of governments and society in recognizing non-Anglicans, non-Englishspeaking people, and non-whites, as full and equal brethren. Not only are most people not aware of this, but many masons as well.

On March 20th, 1991, we were invited to hold our regular meeting in the Oshawa Masonic Hall, where R.W. Bro. Wayne Elgie presented a comprehensive review of 'Masonic Boards of Relief' in Canada and the United States. His approach to the historical sketches of the various Boards of Relief in Ontario is skilfully woven through a history of assistance and charity to sojourning Masons as

well as to many imposters and unworthy men who attempt to separate Masons from their money and property.

The regular May meeting was hosted by Union Lodge No. 6 in Kingston, Ontario, where V.W. Bro. Allan Cohoe presented a paper titled 'From Time Immemorial'. May 15th was the day of the National Truckers Demonstration when they effectively blocked all east and west traffic on all major transportation corridors through and around Metropolitan Toronto. Your editor finally arrived at the place of meeting just as the Tyler was locking the door and leaving for the night.

Bro. Cohoe's paper draws an interesting parallelism between Boethius' The Consolation of Philosophy, and the origin of concepts contained in the 'Old Charges'. After perusing this essay, the reader might ask the question "is there a parallel between some of the problems our fraternity faces today and the decline of the Pathagorean Associations when they became involved in "political" ventures?"

It should be noted that the procedure for paper presentation at the Regular meeting in May was that originally prescribed for all meetings of The Heritage Lodge. This has not been observed for past several years. In this instance we have V.W. Bro. Cohoe's paper, which was circulated to the Reviewer's in ample time to allow them to prepare written comments, which were sent to Bro. Cohoe, also giving him sufficient time to prepare a formal response.

By following the recommended procedure, the voluntary efforts of the Author and Reviewers provides the listening audience, as well as those who read these proceedings, a more complete and informative review of the subject. It also stimulates a more fruitful informal discussion period from the audience.

Now that the Lodge has purchased good quality amplifying and recording equipment for future paper presentations, we may be able to capture and edit some of the informal discussions for inclusion in these proceedings.

Jack Pos, Editor.



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### DISCLAIMER

The contributors to these Proceedings are alone responsible for the opinions expressed and also for the accuracy of the statements made therein, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of The Heritage Lodge.

# YORK/TORONTO ON THE SQUARE\*

1792-1899

by  
V.W. Bro. Walter P. Ford

## FOREWORD

Since its inception as 'Little York', Toronto has undergone many changes which have altered the technical layout of the City and obscured the location of some Masonic sites. One such change was the use of Yonge Street as the east/west separation line whereas Berkley Street had been used previously. The names of streets changed with realignment or extension so that when Yonge was extended south of Lot Street, Lot became Queen Street while Hospital became Richmond Street. The present King St. was originally Duke St. And New Street, which ran south from Hospital first changed to Nelson St. then to Jarvis St. Present day Front St. ended at Jarvis St. and was joined on to Palace St. while Market St. was renamed Wellington St. Present day addresses have been applied to this article and where this could not be done a description of the location is supplied.

## CREDITS

The Metropolitan Toronto research library has been the principal source of my data, however the scanning of the old prints in de Volpi's "Toronto, A Pictorial Record", Denby's "Toronto Lost" and Hounscome's "Toronto 1810" have provided a view of some of these Lodge sites as they used to be. Regrettably I am unable to reproduce them in their entirety but do recommend your perusal of

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\* Paper presented at the Regular Meeting of The Heritage Lodge held in the Preston-Hespeler Masonic Building, Cambridge, September 19, 1990. Bro. Ford is a member of Astra Lodge No. 682 and a Past Grand Steward, G.R.C. A historical walk through the streets of the Town of York, City of Toronto, to find the locations of Lodges of yesteryear.



these books along with Mulvany's Toronto, Past and Present and Adam's Toronto Old and New. Without the use of old Might's City Directories this task may have been impossible and I appreciate their availability.

## PREAMBLE

Before we can walk the streets of York to seek out our Masonic Brethren we must build the town, populate it and guard it from invading forces. When Canada become a British possession the afore-mentioned requirements gradually became a fact and to the existing settlers of Scottish extractions, who had settled under Louis, King of France, were added more settlers from England, Ireland and Wales. More land was needed to accommodate these settlers hence the trek into Upper Canada. In order to maintain an orderly growth in the country the British government sent along Surveyors, Engineers, Clerks, Clergyman, Tax Collectors and the Military. From these groups came the start of Masonry in York.

In 1792, a warrant was issued by the Duke of Kent, P.G.M. of Lower Canada, constituting Rawdon Lodge #13 to meet in York and it was in the hands of William Demont and John Kendrick. It was almost five years before their numbers grew sufficiently to initiate new members, hold elections and file returns to the Provincial Grand Lodge in Montreal.. The first recorded initiation in York was held May 27, 1797, the candidate was William Cooper. On a more sombre note the first Masonic funeral was conducted by Harmony Lodge #8 for a Bro. Alex Perry who lost his life by drowning at Scarborough in the Rouge River on December 11, 1800. Bro Perry is shown as having been a member of the Lodge at the York Garrison.

Wm.Jarvis arrived in Upper Canada during the summer of 1792 and spent the first winter at Newark, now Niagara-on-the-Lake, where he issued a Dispensation for the Queens Rangers to meet as Lodge #3. When the fort at York commenced in 1793, reached a habitable state the entire Garrison relocated to York. The lodge, although few in numbers, met in a building of which a portion was allocated to the Engineers who were attached to the Queen's Rangers. This building was situated at the upper end of the east perimeter where it joined the north end of the western barricades.

The Fort underwent many changes from Simcoe's original sketches, both before and after the 1812/14 incursion. The construction of the railway changed the local topography to such an extent that it is difficult to truly pinpoint the exact location of this building. A close estimate would place it on the site of the Commandant's quarters on the 1816 plan of the Fort.

At the turn of the century a new fort was built and encompassed the old fort site, the Engineer's building was now located at the north juncture of the west wall and the north-west wall. This site too has been altered by the railway lines but it was approximately 400 ft. to the left of the western entrance. The Garrison Lodge continued to meet at the Engineer's building until the Regiment was disbanded May 12, 1802 and the Warrant was surrendered in August 1802.

Should you happen to be viewing the Fort ask the Guides to point out the location of the building which Lieutenant Stretton Converted into a residence for his family. This was the second of the Engineer's buildings used as a Lodge site.

Now let us walk the streets of York and Toronto and see the Lodge sites of its first 100 years as they are today.

## **MASONIC MEETING SITES YORK 1792 THROUGH TORONTO DECEMBER 1899**

The most obvious place to start this Masonic walk is provided by Hathaway's "Jesse Ketchum and His Times" where he describes the arrival of Seneca's younger brother Peter. He disembarked at the Military wharf at the mouth of Garrison Creek and as he trudged up the pathway no doubt he could see the Flag post at the entrance to the Fort. He would later learn of the existence of the Lodge of the Queen's Rangers #3 and of their meeting place adjacent to the Guard house. As he neared the town he came upon some soldiers and requested direction to his brother's home. Upon mentioning his brother's name he was given instruction on how to reach his destination and was assured that as his brother was a well known Mason and he would have no difficulty should further direction be required. Seneca Ketchum was a member of Rawdon Lodge initially numbered 13 by the Duke of Kent, Provincial Grand Master of Lower Canada and Warranted in 1792. At the turn of the century

they were issued a new Warrant by Wm. Jarvis as #16 and left Craft Masonry becoming Royal Arch Lodge #16 and then were absorbed into St. John's Chapter.

Initially being without a quorum their meeting places were many, a tavern on lower George St. owned by Mr. George Kerr, in the home of Mr. John McDougal at the s.e. corner of King and Frederick and a warehouse south side of Front west of George St. After five years they were of sufficient numbers to function as Lodge with meetings held at Mile's Tavern, s.w. corner of King and Sherbourne. With increased membership larger quarters were sought with a move to Marther's Hotel at the n.e. corner of King and Jarvis. When they received their new Warrant as Royal Arch Lodge and Chapter #16 they moved to Barrett's Hotel, n.w. corner of King and Jarvis. A further move in 1801 placed in the White Swan Tavern, n.w. corner of Front and Market Square where they remained for some time after the surrender of their Craft Charter.

Let us proceed to the Sun newspaper building on King St. E. at Ontario St. Here at the south-west corner we find a parking lot, a far cry from the important place it was in the community during the early 1800's. Here was located Mr. Jordan's York Hotel, once a very thriving hostelry and used as temporary meeting place for Parliamentarians when the Legislature was destroyed by fire in the 1812/14 conflict. It was here that Wm. Jarvis issued the Warrant for St. Andrew's #16 to meet as a Lodge upon becoming displeased with the direction St. George's #9 was taking. St. Andrew's became quite a dominating force in the Craft circles. At one time, being actively involved with the attempt to form a Grand Lodge of Canada, it pre-empted #1 for its own use. As we move westwards along King St. and reach Jarvis we find a third Lodge site, this was Marther's Hotel on the north-east corner where Rawdon #16 met. They moved to Barrett's Hotel, upon becoming Royal Arch Lodge, to the north west corner of King and Jarvis. The south-east corner of this intersection was the second site of Mile's Tavern where Harmony #8 met for 15 years. This site was demolished and St. Lawrence Hall erected and for a time space was rented by St. Andrew's #16 as their Lodge hall. After passing the St. Lawrence Bldg. let us cross the lane and turn southwards to our left, here we see the eastern entrance to "The Shops on the Square", a rather appropriate name. As we enter the building we will see a theatre on our right, this is the closest mark we can find for the site of the Market Lane School, 14 Market Lane. It



was the masonic home to St. George's Lodge #9 from 1820-25 and to St. Andrew's from 1823 for a six month period, again from 1824/26 and 1829/34 with a final stay from 1840/43.

The Market Lane School was build primarily as a Masonic Hall. It was a two storey frame building with a cupola at the eastern end which was meant to house a bell but never did receive one. Access was gained to the Lodge room by a set of stairs at the west end of the structure while the lower floor served as a public school a Mechanics Institute or library and a church on weekends. The building fell onto hard times during the Morgan affair when lodges became dormant due to non attendance. Neglect was so severe that when the Craft began its revival and was of a mind to use the hall again it was found to be uneconomical for repair. It was sold for a trivial sum, nothing down and no records to show that it was ever paid for. The end of an era for wooden structures. If we were to continue down the lane to Front Street we would reach the site of the White Swan Tavern where Royal Arch #16 met.

Walking through this fine building we exit via the west entrance onto Church St. at the one time Market Lane. This was the site of Beard's Hotel and the masonic home for St. Andrew's #16 from, 1848/54 and to Ionic Lodge #25 from 1853/58. A left turn here will bring us to Front St. and as we cross towards the west we see a Toronto Dominion Bank at the north-west corner of Wellington St. and Church. This location was the original site of a private home later converted into the Wellington Hotel. While it was a hotel the site was the meeting place for Toronto Lodge #8 who were the successors to Harmony Lodge #8 who met at the Miles Tavern on King. E., south-west corner of Jarvis. Proceeding north from Wellington we pass the site of the Western Assurance Bldg. 28 Church St. south-west corner of Colborne, this was the meeting place of King Solomon Lodge #22 from 1853 to 1858. This location was also used by Wilson Lodge #86 from 1857 to 1865 and is now an apartment complex.

Continuing north to Court St. and Church this south-west corner, now a parking lot, was once the Odd Fellow's Hall from whom the King Solomon Lodge leased space from 1852 to 1853.

Turning onto Court St. we arrive midway up Toronto St. There on the west side of the street we see the former third Toronto post

office now the Argus Corporation offices. Immediately to its north is the location of the Nordheimer Bldg. 14 Toronto St., the home of St. Andrews Lodge #16 from 1858/1899 and to Ionic Lodge #25 for the same period while King Solomon moved into the premises in 1866 to 1899. Other lodges meeting here were Wilson Lodge #86, 1866-99; Zetland #326, 1875-99; Doric #316, 1874-99; Rehoboam #65, 1866-99; St. John's #75, 1866-99; Harmony #438, 1895-99.

As we walk south to King St. E. we see the facade of the newly renovated King Edward Hotel. At this site to the west of Leader Lane stood the Leader Press and next to it was Dixon's Hardware and Leather wares, 55-57 King St. E., King Solomon's Lodge #22 rented Lodge space there from 1850-52 while Ionic #25 rented from 1847-52.

We will continue to walk west along King W. to Bay St. As we view the mass that is the Toronto Dominion Centre we must visualize that somewhere on the King St. face, about half way along, was a building known as Lamb's Hotel, 57 King W., which latterly became known as the Turton bldg., McKeeva's Recess. This building was also occupied by St. Andrew's #16 from 1843 until 1848.

Retracing our steps back to Bay St. we turn north towards Queen St. As we cross over at the north-west corner of Richmond W. we note a modern office complex. Prior to the end of the nineteenth century this was the location of what has been termed as one of the finest structures in Toronto. It was known as the Temple Building, built for the Foresters and became home to many of the City's fraternities, Rehoboam #65 was one of the earliest occupants having moved in during 1899 as did Stevenson #218 and Harmony #438.

Having reached Queen St. W. at Bay we turn to the left and walk along the south side of Queen St. we now come to the last of the lodge sites in old York. the first is Mr. Truman's Tyronne Tavern. It was located at 125/127 Queen St. W. just across from Osgoode Hall. It was Mr. Truman's cows grazing on the lawn at Osgoode that brought about the installation of the special gates. King Solomon Lodge met at the tavern from 1845 until 1850 and the location is within the confines of the Provincial Supreme Courts Building. The next site is that of Occident Lodge #346, they met at 507-545 Queen St. W. on the upper floor of a commercial building



from 1876 through 1899. Tucked around the corner from Occident we have the site of St. George #367 at 175 Bathurst northeast corner of Richmond, their occupancy of this site ran from 1878 to 1899.

Surrounding the town of York was a large tract of land known as the Home District covering Milton in the west, Aurora to the north and the Rouge River to the east. These remote towns and villages were very much a part of our heritage but it would stretch our capabilities to delineate them into a walk. I shall show them by their dates of origins and location but first, remember that Colborne St. did not exist before the Market Lane Masonic Hall went into decline, it never was on Colborne as some researchers imply.

Within the area immediately adjacent to York/Toronto were several well established lodges which are still existent today. To the east, just overlooking the Scadding bridge, was the village of Riverside. It was here that Orient Lodge #339 met at 71 McGee St. from 1875 until 1882 when the building became untenable and caused a move to 4 Bolton St. north-east corner of Queen St. E. where they remained until 1899 then moved to the St. Matthew's Parish Hall on Gerrard St. E. A second lodge came into being in the Riverside area during the year of 1890 and until 1899 the home of Acacia Lodge #430 was the Toronto East Masonic Hall, Gerrard St. E.

Just to the north of Bloor St. in the small town of Yorkville we find Ashlar Lodge #247 occupying the upper floor of 801 Yonge St. south east corner of Collier. They used these facilities from 1871 until 1875 at which time they moved across the street into new quarters within the Yorkville town hall to the close of the century. A commercial building at the corner of College St. and Brunswick Avenue, north east, variously identified as #1, #3 and #5 Brunswick, was occupied by Georgina Lodge, #343 from 1875 to 1899. This building was destroyed by fire in the 1960's.

Travelling north on Yonge St. we come to the Village of Pleasant and the site of Montgomery's Tavern of 1837 note. After its destruction by the Militia it remained derelict for several years. Eventually Mr. Montgomery rebuilt on the site and named the new tavern The Prospect House which became the site for York Lodge #156 from 1863 until 1871. The progress of York lodge was notable, they acquired property to the north of the Prospect House where

they build their own Temple Building. They moved from the southwest corner of Yonge and Montgomery to the north-west corner in 1871 and for ten years practised their craft until disaster struck in 1881. The Prospect House took fire, flames were blown across the street, the York Temple was destroyed. The building was purchased by the Township of North York and razed, a new building erected became the town hall and York Lodge became tenants until the turn of the century.

The village of Parkdale was home to two Lodges before the twentieth century arrived and the sorting-out of their respective addresses has been a real challenge, partly due to sketchy information within their minutes and to the incorporation into the city with realignment of property numbering. Alpha #384 was the first in the area and occupied what was referred as the Masonic Hall at the Parkdale firehall and located at present day number 1299 Queen St.W. This building was their home from 1880 until 1895 at which time they relocated to the new Masonic Hall at 1483/87 Queen W. south east corner of Dowling and remained there until the latter part of 1899.

The second lodge in Parkdale was Zeta Lodge #410, Warranted in 1885 and after a period settled in the former home of Alpha Lodge, 1299 Queen St. W. where they remained until the end of November 1899 at which time they moved into the new Masonic Hall at 1487 Queen W.

To the north-west of Parkdale we have the area formerly known as the Junction, the present Toronto West. The Masonic needs for the district was provided by Stanley Lodge, #426, they received their Charter in 1890 and met at 34 Dundas St. E., which was at the time the Chambers above the Bank of Hamilton on the north-east corner of Dundas E. at Heintzman. They remained at this location until the end of 1899 and with incorporation into the City this portion of Dundas St. was changed from east to west. The bank was demolished and a new building on the site was assigned the number 3 Heintzman and is occupied by the Salvation Army.

Continuing west along Dundas St. will bring us to the sites of Mimico Lodge #369 in Islington. From 1878 until 1882 they utilized the rooms above the driving shed of Brownridges Hotel, northeast corner of Dundas St. W. at Burnamthorpe Rd. After acquiring the

property and erecting a Temple they moved into 4238 Dundas St. W. where they remained more than 70 years.

Approximately 9 miles (14.5 km) northwest of the city the town of Weston came into being. It was a hustling and bustling town and many Masons from the British Isles took up residence there. It was not too long before they got together and petitioned for a charter which was granted in July 1874 in the name of Humber Lodge #305. They met in the Eagle House Hotel which was located at the northeast corner of Weston Rd. and Lawrence Ave. This building was demolished in 1969 and perhaps some Brethren can recall the Shell gas station to the rear of the old hotel, it was a stable for the guest's horses. When Grand Lodge made overtures against strong drink in Lodge facilities Mr. Eagle, the proprietor of the Eagle House, offered to build a new meeting place but it was declined and in 1880 Humber moved to King St. They occupied a building owned by William Tyrrell on the north side of King St. some where between the site of the present Library and George St. The Assessment rolls show the address as Concession 5 Lot 6. After six years at the King St. location space became available on Church St., north side near Cross St., in a former Methodist Chapel This building was also used by the Oddfellows and seems to have been quite amicable as Humber remained there well after World War 1 when they moved into their own building which they still occupy. The Oddfellows Hall is still in the existence at the time of this writing.

Prior to 1878 ten Lodges met in Toronto but there were none west of Bathurst St. until 1880 when Alpha Lodge 384 was formed in the village of Parkdale, it was soon followed by Zeta Lodge 410 in 1885.

The Toronto District was then comprised of eight Lodges in the immediate vicinity, York 156 at Eglinton, Zeredtha 220 at Uxbridge, Ionic 229 at Brampton, Ashlar 247 at Yorkville, Humber 305 at Weston, Brock 354 at Cannington and River Park 356 at Streetsville. Two Lodges received dispensation that year, St. Georges 367 and Mimico 369 along with a general redistribution of the Lodges.

Continuing growth of the Toronto District reached such proportions that it became impossible for one District Deputy to administer the duties in his area.

At the annual Communication of July 20, 1898, the District was divided into Toronto West #11 and Toronto East #11A as follows;

### West #11

Vaughan 54	Mimico 369
True Blue 98	York 156
Union 118	Stanley 426
Ionic 229	King Solomon 22
Patterson 265	Relioboam 65
Robertson 292	Wilson 86
Blackwood 311	Ashlar 247
River Park 356	Zetland 326
Humber 305	Occident 346
Alpha 384	Harmony 438

### East #11A

Richmond 23	Doric 424
Markham Union 87	Acacia 430
Sharon 97	Orient 339
Rising Sun 129	St. Andrews 16
Richardson 136	Ionic 25
Zeredetha 220	St. John's 75
Brougham Union 269	Stevenson 218
Brock 354	Doric 316
St. Georges 367	Georgina 343
Zeta 410	

The passage of time had a most devastating effect on the early structures in "Old York". Being built of wood and given the poor drainage of the land they fell victims of dry rot at ground level so that within seven years were in need of serious repair or replace. The second series of buildings were more durable since stone, brick and mortar were now available but they fell as victims of fire or the wrecker's hammer to make way for larger and taller structures. In some cases fate has been kind to our old lodge sites and are occupied by such note worthy buildings as the Provincial Supreme Court and the Toronto Dominion Centre.



You may notice that there were two separate locations for "Miles Tavern", this is due to Abner Miles having sold his business to William Cooper and relocated to King and Jarvis.

A work of explanation would be in order now on the subject of two Lodges with the same number, Harmony and Toronto as #8.

A charter was issued to a group of Brethren to meet as Harmony Lodge #8, although they were authorized in 1796 very little is on record to indicate their activities until 1799. The Upper Canada Gazette & Western Oracle reported that the Brethren of Harmony Lodge #8 conducted the first Masonic funeral service in York for Bro. Alexander Perry of Scarborough. Bro. Perry was drowned in the Rouge river on December 11, 1800 and had formerly been a member of the Queen's Rangers at the York Garrison. Harmony surrendered the Charter on Jan. 12, 1811 and a petition was granted by Rt. Wor. Bro. Jarvis to a group of Brethren to meet as Toronto Lodge #8 on June 1811. There were no reports submitted for two years and they were considered dormant in 1817.

The old sites as visited on Sept. 1, 1894 were occupied as follows;  
Miles Tavern, King St. sw Sherbourne, old building and shops.  
Mather's Hotel, ne King & Jarvis, old building and store.

Barret's Hotel, nw King & Jarvis, Bank.

Miles Tavern, sw King & Jarvis, St. Lawrence Market Building.

White Swan Tavern, nw Front & Market, Apartments and shops.

Ft. York, Garrison, First Fort demolished.

Second Fort, modified but existent.

Wellington Hotel, nw Wellington & Church, T.D. Bank.

Market Lane School, 14 Market Lane, "Shops at Market Square".

Ridout Residence, nw Wellington & Dorset, parking lot.

Turton Building, 57 King W., Toronto Dominion Centre.

Beard's Hotel, ne Church and Colbourne, "Shops at Market Square".

St. Lawrence Bldg., King & Jarvis, still present.

Jordan's York Hotel, 293 King E., Parking lot.

Nordhiemer Bldg., 14 Toronto St., office building.

Temple Bldg., nw Bay & Richmond, office complex.

Tyronne Tavern, 125 Queen W., Provincial Supreme Courts.

Dixon's Hardware, 55 King St. E., The King Edward Hotel.

Odd Fellows Hall, Church & Court St. parking lot.

Western Assurance Bldg., 28 Church, apartment building.

507/545 or 639/647 Queen W., commercial building.



175 Bathurst St., tavern.

71 McGee, old houses.

1299 Queen W., Storage Business.

1487 Queen W. at Dowling, Community Centre.

Prospect House, sw Yonge & Montgomery, Postal Station.

York Temple, nw Yonge & Montgomery, Police Station.

Yorkville Town Hall, Yonge & Yorkville, Store and parking lot.

801 Yonge at Montieth, Metro Toronto Library.

5 Brunswick Ave., Parkette.

Brownridge Hotel, nw Dundas & Burnamthorpe, Tavern.

Bank of Hamilton, 34 dundas E., now Salvation Army Hostel,  
3 Heintzman Ave.

Lambton Mills Temple, 4238 Dundas W., Demolished.

Weston Temple, Eagle House Hotel, ne corner Lawrence and  
Weston Rd., now apartment and office complex.

" " Moved to north side of Church St., Odd Fellows Hall still  
on site.

This completes my review of York/Toronto Lodge sites from 1792 until 1900. It was my intention to cover the first 100 years of York ending at 1892 but when I noticed that only one lodge had been instituted after 1892 I decided to include it in my work. Much to my surprise I discovered that in 1898 Grand Lodge expanded the Toronto jurisdictions to such a vast extent that it would required ten times more input for one-tenth return. These outlying Lodges are mentioned briefly in the chapter of the two Toronto Districts and I am certain that many chapters could be written on each one.

# CHRONOLOGY

<u>Lodge</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Meeting Place</u>
Rawdon #13 LC	1792-1799	Miles Taverns, sw cor. King & Sherbourne
Rawdon #16 UC	1799-1800	Marther's Hotel, ne cor. King & Jarvis
Royal Arch #16	1800-1801	Barrett's Hotel, nw cor. King & Jarvis
	1801-1821	White Swan Tavern, nw cor. Front & Market Sq.
Queen's Rangers #31	1793-1802	Fort York Garrison
Harmony #8	1796-1811	Miles Tavern, sw cor. King & Jarvis
Toronto #8	1811-1817	Wellington Hotel, nw cor. Wellington & Church
St. Georges #9	1820-1825	Market Lane School, 14 Market Lane
St. Andrews #16	1822-1823	Jordans York Hotel, 293 King St. E.
	Apr.-Oct./23	Market Lane School
	Nov.-Dec./23	Res. Geo. Ridout, nw cor. Wellington & Dorset
	1824-1826	Market Lane School
	1834-1840	Dormant
	1840-1843	Market Lane School
	1843-1848	Turton Building, 57 King St. W
	1848-1854	Beard's Hotel, ne cor. Church & Colborne
	1854-1858	St. Lawrence Bldg., King St. E. & Jarvis
	1858-1899	Nordheimer Bldg., 14 Toronto St.
	1899-	Temple Bldg., nw cor. Bay & Richmond St.
King Solomon #22	1845-1850	Tyrone Tavern, 125/27 Queen St. W.
	1850-1852	Dixon's Hardware, 55 King St. E.
	1852-1853	Oddfellow's Hall, Church & Court St.
	1853-1858	Western Assurance Bldg., 28 Church Street.
	1858-1865	Nordheimer Bldg., 14 Toronto St.
	1866-1899	28 Church St. sw cor. Colborne St.
Ionic #25	1847-1852	Dixon's Hardware, 55 King St. E.
	1853-1858	Beard's Hotel, ne cor. Church & Colborne
	1858-1899	Nordheimer Bldg., 14 Toronto St.
Rehoboam #65	1856-1899	Nordheimer Bldg., 14 Toronto St.
	1899-	Temple Bldg., nw cor. Bay & Richmond
St. John's #75	1856-1899	Nordheimer Bldg., 14 Toronto St.
	1899-	Temple Bldg., nw cor. Bay & Richmond

Wilson #86	1857-1865	Western Assurance Bldg., 28 Church St.
	1866-1899	Nordhiemer Bldg., 14 Toronto St.
Stevenson #218	1869-1899	Nordhiemer Bldg., 14 Toronto St.
	1899-	Temple Bldg., nw cor. Bay & Richmond
York #156	1863-1871	Prospect House, sw. cor. Yonge & Montgomery
	1871-1899	Masonic Hall/North York Town Hall, nw cor. Yonge & Montgomery
Ashlar #247	1871-1875	801 Yonge St. sw cor. Collier
	1875-1899	Yorkville Town Hall, Yonge & Yorkville
Humber #305	1874-1880	Eagle House Hotel, nw cor. Weston Rd. & Lawrence
	1880-1886	King St., Weston
	1886-1899	Oddfellows Hall, Church St., Weston
Doric #316	1874-1899	Nordhiemer Bldg., 14 Toronto St.
Zetland #326	1875-1899	Nordhiemer Bldg., 14 Toronto St.
Orient #339	1875-1882	71 McGee St.
	1882-1899	4 Bolton St. at Queen St. E.
Georgina #343	1875-1899	5 Brunswick Ave., ne cor. College
Occident #346	1876-1899	507/545 Queen St. W. nr Bathurst
St. George #367	1878-1899	175 Bathurst at Richmond W.
Mimico #369	1878-1882	Brownridges Hotel, Dundas St. & Burnhamthorpe
	1882-1899	Lambton Temple, 4238 Dundas St. W.
Alpha #384	1880-1885	Masonic Temple, 1299 Queen St. W.
	1885-1899	New MAsonic Hall, 1483 Queen St. W.
Zeta #410	1885-1899	Old Masonic Hall, 1229 Queen St. W.
	1899-	New Masonic Hall, 1483 Queen St. W.
Stanly #426	1890-1899	3 Heintzman Ave., ne cor. Dundas St. W.
Acacia #430	1890-1899	Toronto East Masonic Hall, 4 Boulton St. at Queen St. E.
Harmony #438	1895-1899	Norhiemer Bldg., 14 Toronto St.
	1899-	Temple Bldg., nw cor. Bay & Richmond.

Please Note: Market Lane was one street south of King St. E. and ran from Church St. east into Market Square.

W.P. Ford

## REVIEWS OF PAPER PRESENTED TO THE HERITAGE LODGE

September 19, 1990

by

V.W. Bro. Walter P. Ford

### YORK/TORONTO ON THE SQUARE

**FIRST REVIEW** - was prepared by R.W. Bro. Edmund V. Ralph, a Charter Member of The Heritage Lodge.

V.W. Bro Walter P. Ford has done what I would have liked to have done and never got around to it. I have noted that he has called the paper a "walk through" and not a "walking tour", but it is written as a "historical walking tour". I managed to actually walk the tour recommended by Bro. Ford and found it most interesting. I did the tour mainly for historical valuation purposes and to try and imagine for myself what it would have been like attending various lodges before 1900 within the city of Toronto.

The paper deals with what was our masonic "built heritage". I am hopeful that this is not our last one on this subject. Sometimes I think that we modern day freemasons do not have enough pride in our buildings. If this paper does nothing else, it shows that the problems the mason had in maintaining their buildings are really no different than we have to day. For me there is a clear message in this paper that we have to make more efficient economical use of our lodge buildings than we have ever done. We cannot continue paying rents that use up the largest proportion of our lodge dues.

In order to appreciate the quality of this paper, one has to understand how difficult it is to get this type of information compiled. It is safe to say that the information is not all in the same place. It is therefore tedious and detailed work to construct the information. I compliment Bro. Ford on the time table of lodge occupancies in the



buildings at the end of the paper and the accuracy in general of the written paper.

1. Ashlar Lodge #247 was formed in the Village of Yorkville Town Hall and paid \$8.33 per month for their space. The dates should be reversed, because this was after their first meeting place (Source: 1935 History of Ashlar Lodge by Lew Riggs).

2. Accurate dates are really not that important, but it does make a difference in the case of St Johns Lodge because the Nordheimer Building was not built until 1857 and occupancy of it is shown by Ford as 1856 (Source: "Lost Toronto" by William Dendy). The significance of the Nordheimer Bldg. is that it was, I believe, the first time Toronto lodges signed a joint lease. The lodges were King Solomon's, St Andrew's, Ionic, Rehoboam and St John's which is verified from Bro Ford's research and confirmed in the James Bain History of St Andrew's Lodge, 1868. Bro. Ford has rightly indicated that the Building was known to the citizens of Toronto as the Masonic Hall and not Masonic Temple. I believe it was primarily these Lodges, the Scottish Rite and Ashlar Lodge which were the power behind the building of 888 Yonge Street.

In all fairness the story of 888 Yonge Street is not part of this paper but stories like this is what makes history interesting.

3. It would have added to the paper to have included the buildings used by the Scottish Rite at 111-113 King St. W. and 2 Gloucester St. ("Scottish Rite Freemasonry in the Valley of Toronto", by Fred Branscombe). The use of Lodge rooms by the Toronto Royal Arch Chapters would have also been useful for this period.

4. It is my view that historical research must link the past with the present or the future. I find that the paper does not attempt to make any observations or conclusions from the research. Neither is there any anecdotes about the Masonic Community of the day or the lodge deliberations on their moves, the owners or architects of the buildings nor the non masonic significance of the buildings e.g. One could have looked at the transition from meeting in hotels to meeting in other places; or studied the development of the consecration ceremony for lodge rooms; or the masonic committees and boards which managed the buildings; or the changing interior furnishings of the lodge. I have noted from the paper that the Provincial Parliament had to meet in the Jordan Hotel where a lodge



met because the Americans burnt the first parliament Buildings in 1813. This is the type of information that lends itself to meaningful historical information.

Between the lines however, V.W. Bro. Ford has painted the following picture for me: by the 1850's there was a trend away from the use of hotel rooms to other less public buildings; masonic ownership of lodge buildings (i.e. as opposed to leasing) did not occur until about the 1870's when some of the rural lodges became owners of their own buildings. The real story that remains to be told in detail is from the 1900's to the time of building 888 Yonge Street. At that time the Masons of Toronto were united in wanting their own Home, i.e. a single purpose building for Freemasonry, so badly they ignored the necessity for a commercial revenue to supplement the lodge dues revenue---a legacy which we in Toronto are locked into today.

I like the research. I think it is a significant contribution. I like the subject because it can tell many stories. I see it, however, as a beginning.

E.V. Ralph

# THE UNIVERSALITY OF FREEMASONRY

by

R.W. Bro. Wallace E. McLeod

We sometimes have trouble recognizing that all human beings are the children of God, that (as Saul of Tarsus told the Athenians) God has "made of one blood all nations of man for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26). Almost automatically, we tend to practise discrimination. It's all too easy to find examples, even among those who should be closest to our hearts. In recent years a few female journalists and academics have been reminding us that some forms of standard English are sexist, and can be offensive to thoughtful women. They object to the fact that such terms as chairman, mailman, fireman, and policeman are used for jobs that a woman can do. For my part, I always say that the word "man" in English has two meanings: first, a member of the human race; second, the male of the species; and that, grammatically speaking, the "default gender" is masculine. I am correct as a linguist, but the feminists point out correctly that the language has evolved through eight thousand generations of patriarchal society.

The Scriptures provide ample evidence of a male-dominated society. In the Garden of Eden, God said to the first woman, "Thy husband ... shall rule over thee" (Genesis 3:16). When we turn to the New Testament, we encounter such passages as, "Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak.... And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home" (1 Corinthians 14:34-35); "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands.... For the husband is the head of the wife" (Ephesians 5:23-24); "Ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands" (1 Peter 3:1). Is this the will of God? I would argue rather that a form of prejudice is ingrained in the language, and in our Volume Of the Sacred Law, and that prejudice is directed against one-half of the human race.

Again, perhaps as many as eight percent of all people are left-handed. Do you recall the time when you went to school? Was

there any provision made for them? In more recent years changes have crept in. There are now desk-seats for the left-handed. But some things never change. We can all think of athletes who are known as "Lefty." Did you ever hear of anyone whose nickname was "Righty"? What do we mean when we say that somebody is "sinister," or "gauche"? (These are the Latin and French words for "left.") What do we mean by a "left-handed compliment"? This deep-set prejudice is aimed at people of our own age, culture, background, education, society! How much worse we are if they have a different religion, or if they look different!

In fact, it does not seem to be natural to mankind, as a group, to be terribly tolerant, or thoughtful, of those who are different. In general, "different" people tend not to be accepted. In some sense this must be an inheritance from the distant past, when the family, or the village, or the tribe, had to be ready to stake out its terrain and defend it against outsiders. How much easier it would be if we could always think the worst of those others! And we could do this because we didn't know them very well. The British writer J. B. Priestley, in his essay "On Hating Strangers," tells a story about a great figure of literature. "[Charles] Lamb was once hotly assailing the reputation of a certain person, when his hearer, rather surprised at this outburst, interrupted it to say that he had no idea that Lamb knew the man in question. 'Know him!' Lamb exclaimed. 'Of course I don't know him. I could never hate anyone I know.' .... Most of us could, in all sincerity, have made exactly the same reply.... We reserve our real hatred for people we do not know." {1}\*\*

There is, as we all know, a tremendous collection of racist jokes and stories. {2} They are about my ancestors, the Scotch, and about my mother's people, the Irish, and about the English, and about the Poles, and the Italians, and the Greeks, and the Jews, and about the Chinese, and the Blacks. Some are nasty, some are a bit funny. Part of the humour, and part of the nastiness, in such jokes depends on stereotyping, that is, in assuming that every member of a particular ethnic group shares certain characteristics.

Now, don't get me wrong. Not all stereotyping is based on fiction. Some groups of people, for reasons of upbringing, or

\*\* Numbers in brackets {} refer to references, see 'NOTES'.

environment, tend to behave in a consistent way. My people, the Scotch, are parsimonious, because the land from which they spring, Scotland, is a poor land, and the inhabitants have to be careful in order to survive. That is a fact, and there's no harm if people recognize the fact, and I can live with it if they laugh at me and my people because we are "cheap." Still, it doesn't make me happy, and it would be nicer if they didn't make fun of me. But sometimes I wonder if we've gone too far in our reactions. Not too long ago the Canadian author Robertson Davies had this to say about such things: "Nowadays if you're funny at anybody's expense they run to the U.N. and say, 'I must have an ombudsman to protect me.' You hardly dare have a shrewd perception about anybody. The only people you can abuse are the WASPs. They're fair game." {3} In the final analysis, I have no objection to people calling me a cheap Scotchman; but I don't think they ought to treat me unfairly or unjustly because of it.

Now I want to talk a for a few minutes about the Universality of Masonry. Modern Freemasonry is descended from the British operative masons of six hundred years ago; at that time the masons were all English-speaking, white-skinned Caucasians, and their religion was Roman Catholic. With the Reformation in England, they became white English-speaking Anglicans. In those days, white English-speaking Anglicans were the only ones with any political rights in England; all others were subject to discrimination by society. What I want to do this evening is to remind you of how far ahead of society Freemasonry was in such matters.

In England, according to the Test Act of 1673, all office holders under the Crown had to take their sacraments according to the usage of the Church of England. A further Test Act of 1678 stated that Members of Parliament and Peers of the realm had to make an affirmation of religious belief. These Test Acts served to exclude other Protestants, and Catholics, and certainly non-Christians, from holding any sort of public office. (Admittedly, from 1729 on Dissenting Protestants were able to escape some of the restrictions, by what were called annual indemnity acts.) But not until 1828 were the Test Act and the Corporation Act repealed. After that date, in place of the sacramental test, the person had to make a declaration "on the true faith of a Christian." This at least opened the doors to Protestant Dissenters.



But as well as religious prejudice, there was racial prejudice in England. In 1762 John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute, became Prime Minister of Britain. We are told that he was "hated by the populace for being ... a Scotsman ..., and he was mobbed on his way to the Guildhall banquet." Or again, as late as 1835, Sir John Campbell, the British Attorney-General, was referred to in a London newspaper as "this shrewd, coarse, manoeuvring Pict, ... this booing, fawning, jobbing progeny of haggis and cockaleekie" -- which sounds pretty racist to me. {4}

How did Masonry fit into this? More than a century earlier, in September 1721, the Grand Master ordered Rev. James Anderson to prepare a new Book of Constitutions. He was of course a Scotchman, from Aberdeen, and a Presbyterian. In Scotland, he would have belonged to the established church; but he was living in England, as minister of the Swallow Street Scotch Presbyterian Church in London, and I assume that that he was subject to the Test Act. Here was this Scotchman, this Presbyterian, a man excluded from all forms of public life, acting as Secretary of the Grand Lodge of England and writing its Constitutions, the most influential Masonic book ever written.

As we saw, the other Protestants were eventually given a measure of political power. In the very next year, the Catholic Emancipation Act granted Roman Catholics the right to sit in Parliament and to hold office. Until that date, 1829, they were without political power, and in general there was a fairly strong prejudice against them.

We don't know when the earliest Catholic was initiated into the modern Craft. We do know that in 1738 the Pope issued an official condemnation of Freemasonry. Not too long ago, a notable historian, a Spanish Jesuit priest, had this to say (I translate): "The strangest and most paradoxical feature about this papal bull was that Clement XII was condemning Masonry ... at the very time when, in an England that was anti-papist and anti-catholic, ... Freemasonry was one of the few organizations that admitted Catholics -- to such an extent that in 1729, it was a Catholic, Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, who was named Grand Master." {5} This was a full century before the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829. And the Duke's successor, installed in 1732, he sixth Viscount Montagu, was also a Catholic.{6}



We've looked at Protestants who were not Anglicans, and at Catholics, and we've found that Freemasonry was a hundred years ahead of the times. When we go beyond these boundaries, there is a problem for those who believe in the literal truth of the Bible. Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15-16). Those who interpret this passage literally will find it hard to understand Freemasonry, and its way of letting men of different faiths pray together, each to the Supreme Being in whom he believes.

Of course Jews were excluded from political life by the Test Act of 1673, and even after its removal in 1828 they were still subject to disability, because of the requirement to make a declaration "on the true faith of a Christian." In earlier days in Britain a Jew could not be given a peerage. Let us cite one example. Sampson Gideon was a Jewish financier who was of tremendous help to the British government in financial matters during the wars of 1742-1759. "It was his ambition to be made a baronet; but, this being considered impossible on account of his religion, a baronetcy was conferred in 1759 on his son Sampson, then a boy of fifteen under education as a Christian at Eton." {7} Not until 1858 was the religious barrier removed. In that year the British House of Commons altered the Parliamentary oath, allowing Jewish candidates to omit the Christian formula, and as a result Baron Rothschild was able to take his seat in the House of Commons. (Actually Canada had been ahead of Britain in this. In 1832, in both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council of Lower Canada, a Bill was passed with the title "An Act to declare persons professing the Jewish Religion entitled to all the rights and privileges of the other subjects of His Majesty in this Province.") {8}

What was the attitude of Freemasonry at the time when Jews were deprived of political rights? The first brethren with Jewish names, Nathan Blanch and John Hart, were initiated in the Lodge of Antiquity in 1721. The register of members for 1725 includes Israel Segalas and Nicholas Abrahams. Daniel Delvalle, who is described as "an Eminent Jew snuff merchant," was Master of a lodge in 1732. Solomon Mendez was Grand Steward in 1732, and Dr Meyer Schomberg in 1734 -- all this a century and a quarter before Jews were allowed to sit in Parliament. {9}

Now let us move from Britain to the other parts of the world to which the British flag was carried, those parts inhabited by the "fluttered folk and wild --- ... The silent, sullen peoples, ... Half devil and half child," as Kipling called them. {10} The natives of these regions looked different, and sometimes it was hard to understand why they acted the way they did. One could only suspect the worst of them. A missionary in India writing in 1841 "summed up the Hindu character as 'obsequious, deceitful, licentious, and avaricious,'" and said that the people were "destitute of all that is good, and distinguished by almost all that is evil." {11}

A Masonic Lodge was established in India in 1732, but it was composed of Englishmen. {12} You do not begin to have the people of the area initiated until later. The First Mason from India was a Moslem, the Nabob of the Carnatic, Omrat-ul-Omrah, who was initiated in 1775. This did not break down the barriers, for nearly forty years later, when a Moslem was to be initiated, the Secretary of the Lodge, and another member, refused to attend, "saying that they were obligated not to be present at the Initiation of a Turk Jew or Infidel, and they considered all Mahomedans, Turks."

A Parsee, Maneckji Cursetji, was initiated in a French Lodge at some date before 1843. The first Hindu Masons, Raganatha Sastri and Murugesu Mudaliar, were initiated in 1857. The first Indian to become an active Grand Lodge Officer was a Parsee, Dorabjee Pestonjee Cama, Grand Treasurer in 1886. In due course, Freemasonry in India came to be very receptive of men of other faiths. It was the custom to have five volumes of the sacred law available for the altar, Gita for the Hindu, Koran for the Moslem, Granth Sahib for the Sikh, Zend Avesta for the Parsi, and Holy Bible for the Christian. {13} This tolerant attitude is reflected in Kipling's poem, "The Mother-Lodge," written in 1896. {14}

There was Rundle, Station Master,  
An' Beazeley of the Rail,  
An' 'Ackman, Commissariat,  
An' Donkin' o' the Jail;  
An' Blake, Conductor-Sergeant,  
Our Master twice was 'e,  
With 'im that kept the Europe-shop,  
Old Framjee Eduljee.... [Parsee]

We'd Bola Nath, Accountant,[Hindu]  
 An' Saul, the Aden Jew, [Jew]  
 An' Din Mohammend, draughtsman [Moslem]  
 Of the Survey Office, too;  
 There was Babu Chuckerbutty, [Hindu]  
 An' Amir Singh the Sikh, [Sikh]  
 An' Castro from the fittin'-sheds,  
 The Roman Catholic!.... [Catholic]

We turn now to the New World. We know that the Europeans who came to America were not very appreciative of the people who were already here. We've all heard how General Philip Sheridan in 1869 said, "The only good Indians I ever saw were dead." {15} A history of New England, printed in 1889, said that it was wrong "to suppose that savages, whose business is to torture and slay, can always be dealt with according to the methods in use between civilized peoples." {16} As recently as 1969, an official pamphlet recommended by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization could say that most of the Indians "were wandering savages who did nothing to develop this great country." {17}

The first American Indian to join the Craft was Joseph Brant, Thayendanegea, the Mohawk war chief (1742/3-1807); he was initiated in Lodge No 417, meeting at the Falcon Public House, Princes Street, Leicester Fields, London; his Masonic certificate is dated 26 April 1776. But there were others as well, who came later: the Oneida John Konkipot, who was also involved in the Revolution, but on the wrong side; the Cherokee chief John Ross, who was associated with the long march from Tennessee to what is now Oklahoma; the Seneca General Ely S. Parker, after whom a lodge in Buffalo is named; and the Apache physician Dr Carlos Montezuma. About 1797, in Canada, a lodge, No 11, was founded in the Mohawk Village, now Brantford, with Joseph Brant as Master. Its members were Mohawks. {18}

I move on to a problem that is becoming increasingly vexing for Freemasonry, particularly in the United States. Obviously in a household, or on a farm, or on a ship, or in a business, there is too much for one person to do. It is essential to have somebody else to do some of the work. You can hire him, but that takes money. You can marry her, and persuade her that all her labour is for the good of the family. But the cheapest way is to own him. Slavery perhaps



began as a merciful convention. Instead of putting a thief or a prisoner-of-war to death, you would spare his life, but make him your property. Black slavery seems to have started with the use of prisoners-of-war, but it developed into a large-scale nasty business. If you are going to look upon a whole section of humanity as fit only for slaves, you will have to rationalize your treatment. Perhaps you will regard them as hardly human, but more in the nature of animals. In the Biblical story of creation, God told the first man and woman to "have dominion ... over all the earth.... Replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:26, 28). One often has the impression that the Europeans of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries believed this injunction to be directed to them, and to them alone.

Even in the nineteenth century, Europeans thought "of the black man as descended from Ham, the black son of Noah," {19} and according to Genesis 9:25, God condemned his descendants to serve the rest of mankind. In 1885, Gilbert and Sullivan in "The Mikado," could say,

There's the nigger serenader, and the others of his race,  
And the piano organist -- I've got him on the list!...

They never would be missed -- they never would be missed!  
{20}

In 1906 Theodore Roosevelt wrote, "Negroes ... as a race and in the mass ... are altogether inferior to the whites." {21} And the great humanitarian, Dr Albert Schweitzer, said, "My general rule is never to trust a black." {22}

One can trace a gradual liberalization on the legislative level. The second session of the Legislature of Upper Canada, on 9 July 1793, passed a law forbidding the importation of any slaves into the colony. Slavery was abolished in the British Empire in 1833. And of course our freedom-loving neighbours to the south issued the Emancipation proclamation in 1865.

On 6 March 1778 a black man, probably a former slave, named Prince Hall, was made a Mason, by a con-artist; within the next three years a number of other blacks were allegedly made Masons, no doubt fraudulently, and they formed a lodge which they called



African Lodge No 1. In 1784, Prince Hall wrote a letter to England, explaining the situation as he understood it, and petitioning, "as Poor yet Sincere Brethren of the Craft," for a Warrant of Constitution. The Grand Lodge of England did in fact issue a warrant, on 29 September 1784, to African Lodge No 459. By any standard you wish to invoke, this granting of a charter by the mother grand lodge made the lodge regular, and ensured that its members were legitimate Masons. African lodge continued to meet, and to make Masons, and to confer degrees upon them. It certainly submitted returns to the Grand Lodge of England, sent contributions to the charity fund, and received replies, as late as 1797. We know that there were other lodges in the vicinity holding their warrants from the Grand Lodge of England, and in due course they formed an independent Grand Lodge. There is no record that they were in contact with this perfectly regular lodge that held a warrant every bit as valid as theirs. The reason for this neglect is given to us by a notable Mason of this very same period. In 1795 John Eliot, later to become Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, wrote as follows: "white masons, [who are] not [any] more skilled in geometry than their black brethren, will not acknowledge them.... The truth is they are ashamed of being on an equality with blacks." That is, the blacks were excluded simply on grounds of racial prejudice.

There is a sequel to the story. In 1813 African Lodge was struck off the rolls of the Grand Lodge of England, because (it seems) the members had not for several years been able to contribute to the Grand Lodge Charity Fund -- a situation that, perhaps, we can all understand. It then ceased to exist as a duly constituted body. It kept on working on its own, and started other lodges of black men in Philadelphia, in Providence, Rhode Island, and in New York City. These lodges in turn formed other lodges, and in due process of time grand lodges. Today there are 44 Grand Lodges that trace their origin back to African Lodge No 459. They are known as Masons of Prince Hall Affiliation. In all, there are 5000 Prince Hall lodges in the world, and 300,000 members. There is a Grand Lodge of the Province of Ontario. {23} The members do much the same sort of thing that we do. They have always been regarded as irregular or clandestine, but within the past year several American jurisdictions have recognized them. Sometimes individual Masons have not shown themselves to be particularly tolerant. The great Albert Pike, the virtual founder of the Scottish Rite, on one occasion

penned the following words, "I took my obligations to white men, not Negroes. When I have to accept Negroes as Brethren or leave Masonry, I shall leave it." {24}

Next, we move to the Far East. European travellers there found it very hard to get used to the people. Not only did they look alien, but they belonged to empires that claimed to be far older than the European ones. A Spanish officer wrote to his superior that "China was Satan's own country, and every man in it had a devil inside him." {25} That great egalitarian Karl Marx spoke with scorn of China's "hereditary stupidity." {26} And in 1870, in the tolerant United States, Bret Harte could say, in his "Ballad of Truthful James,"

Which I wish to remark --  
And my language is plain --  
That for ways that are dark  
And for ways that are vain,  
The heathen Chinese is peculiar.... {27}

A Masonic lodge was established in China in 1767, but once again it was composed of Englishmen. {28} The government of China prevented its own citizens from joining secret societies. This ban began to break down in the middle of the nineteenth century, and in 1857 The Boen Keh became the first Chinese Mason. Their numbers increased greatly in the 1880s. {29}

The government of Japan likewise forbade its people to join secret societies until after the Second World War; and the first Japanese were initiated into Masonry there in 1950. But long before this, in 1864, Amane Nishi, a Japanese who was studying at Leyden in the Netherlands, was made a Mason there. {30}

We have not talked very much about Ontario. We did mention that there was a lodge of North American Indians here from 1797. Bro. Isaac Moses was initiated on 3 December 1798, in Zion Lodge, No 10, Detroit, Upper Canada; he was the first Jewish brother in our jurisdiction. {31} We now have several lodges that are mostly Jewish in their membership, the oldest being Mount Sinai, No 522 (1914). When Archbishop W. L. Wright was Grand Master in 1955-57, "he took the first steps to ensure that the Volume on the altar need not invariably be the Christian scriptures, but that it might instead be the Book that the particular candidate recognized as the

standard of his faith." {32} We have had a Grand Master of the Jewish faith. We have had District Deputy Grand Masters who were black, and who traced their ancestry back to the sub-continent of India. We have a number of brethren of Chinese and Japanese background. So at least we have made a start.

What I have tried to do is to remind you of how Freemasonry was ahead of society in recognizing non-Anglicans, non-English-speaking people, and non-whites, as full and equal brethren. Not all people are aware of this. About 28 September 1990 on radio station CFRB a commentator named Wayne McLean stated that it is well known that Masons are racist, by which he meant anti-Black. (I did not hear him, but my sources are reliable.) This is a slander, and a slur. But, on the other side, there have been non-Masons who recognize what Masonry has done. For example, Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, in their recent (and generally very bad) book called *The Temple and the Lodge* have a good section on Masonic toleration: "Insisting on a universal brotherhood which transcended national frontiers, English Freemasonry was to exert a profound influence on the great reformers of the eighteenth century.... Strictures against religious and political prejudice served to encourage not just tolerance, but also the kind of egalitarian spirit that so impressed visitors from abroad." {33}

The Rev. James Anderson, in his summary of *The Charges of a Free-Mason* (1723) said that, by its non-sectarian nature, "Masonry becomes the Center of Union, and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must have remain'd at a perpetual distance." Masonry accepted dissenters, and Roman Catholics, and Jews, at a time when their political rights were strictly curtailed. It admitted American Indians, and black men, and men from India, and the Far East, at a time when they were still spoken of disparagingly. In all these instances, people who were from different backgrounds were able to meet together as equals on the level. The prophet Malachi says, "Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother ...?" (2:10). This, according to my friend and Masonic brother, Dr George H. T. French of Texas, is one of the sources of the Masonic concept of the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God. {34} And let us never forget how essential the doctrine is to Freemasonry. In this jurisdiction the Brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God has been a landmark since 1976, when the Grand



Master, M.W.Bro. Eric W. Nancekivell specified it as such in his address. {35} We look out at the world, and we see all the stress and tension, all the hostility and rivalry, between country and country, between race and race. How can we solve these problems? What can we do?

.... Masonry makes answer  
With its never-changing plan --  
The Fatherhood of God,  
The Brotherhood of Man! {36}

So it has been. So may it continue.

## NOTES

1. W.J. Alexander, editor, *Short Stories and Essays* (Toronto, 1931), 50-54. The writer expresses his gratitude to John McLeod for most of the citations of sources connected with British and Imperial history.
2. Blanche Knott, editor, *Truly Tasteless Jokes*, a series of at least eight paperback books (New York, 1982-1988); Larry Wilde, editor, *The Complete Book of Ethnic Humor* (New York, 1978).
3. From an interview by Alan Twigg, *Strong Voices: Conversations with Fifty Canadian Authors* (1988), quoted by John Robert Colombo, *Toronto Star* (17 June 1990) C11.
4. G.F. Russell Barker, in Sidney Lee, editor, *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. 55 (London, 1898) 94; William Hutchison, editor, *Whigs and Wiggism* (New York, 1914) 88-89.
5. Jose A. Ferrer Benimeli, "Franc-Maçonnerie et eglise catholique: Motivations politiques des premieres condamnations papales," *Dix-huitieme siecle* 19 (1987) 7-19, on page 10.
6. Will Read, "Let a Man's Religion ... Be what it may ..." *AQC* Vol. 98 (1985) 69-89.



7. W.H. Fremantle, in Leslie Stephen, editor, *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. 21 (London, 1890) 290.
8. Benjamin G. Sack, *History of Jews in Canada* (Montreal, 1945) 96-107, cited by Richard Menkis in a forthcoming collection of essays on Anti-semitism in Canada edited by Alan T. Davies.
9. John M. Shaftesley, "Jews in English Freemasonry in the 18th and 19th Centuries," *AQC* Vol. 92 (1979) 42.
10. Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden' (1899).
11. J. Smith, *The Missionary's Appeal to British Christians on behalf of Southern India* (1841), cited by V.G. Kiernan, *The Lords of Human Kind* (Boston, 1969) 64.
12. A lodge, No. 72, was established by the English in Bengal in 1732; Robert Ingham Clegg, editor, *Mackey's History of Freemasonry* (Chicago, 1921), 7.2272.
13. On Freemasonry in India, see G.E. Walker, "250 Years of Masonry in India: A Study in Resolved Discords," *AQC* Vol. 92 (1979), 176, 177, 178, 182; Frederick Smyth, *AQC* Vol. 92 (1979) 187; Dr. Khambatta, "The District Grand Lodge of the Punjab," to appear in *AQC* for 1990.
14. Rudyard Kipling, "The Mother-Lodge" (1896); *Harry Carr's World of Freemasonry* (London, 1983) 271.
15. Quoted in Paul Jacobs and Saul Landau, with Eve Pell, *To Serve the Devil* (New York, 1971) 1.9.
16. John Fiske, *The Beginnings of New England* (Boston, 1889) 184, quoted by Jacobs-Landau-Pell, *To Serve the Devil* 1,28.
17. Pamphlet, 1969, recommended by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, as appropriate to be given to all those

filing applications to become U.S. citizens in California; quoted in Jacobs-Landau-Pell, *To Serve the Devil* 1.3.

18. William W. Mitchel, "Worshipful Brother Joseph Brant (Thayendanegea)," *Proceedings of The Heritage Lodge No. 730* Vol. 10 (1986-87) 76-94; Wallace McLeod, *Canadian Historical Review* 69.1 (March 1988) 54; J. Ross Robertson, *The History of Freemasonry in Canada from its Introduction in 1749* (Toronto, 1900) 1.679-693; Dwight D. Seals, "Native American Freemasons," *The Philalethes* 43.4 (August 1990) 4-7,20.

19. V.G. Kiernan, *The Lords of Human Kind* (Boston, 1969) 204.

20. *Plays and Poems of W.S. Gilbert* (New York, 1932); now usually bowdlerized as "the banjo serenader."

21. Thomas F. Gossett, *Race: The History of an Idea in America* (New York, 1963) 268.

22. Quoted in Davidson Nicol, *Africa - A Subjective View* (Accra, 1964) 18, cited by Robert Gardiner, *A World of Peoples* (New York, 1966) 42.

23. J. Lawrence Runnals, "The Coloured Man in Freemasonry", *PCMRA* Vol. 77 (1964), reprinted in C.E.B. LeGresley, editor, *PCMRA PAPERS 1949-1976* ([Cambridge, Ontario,] 1986) Vol. 2, 1329-1343; H.W. Coil, in John M. Sherman, *AQC* Vol. 90 (1977) 309; Wallace McLeod, "A Problem for the 90's: Prince Hall Freemasonry and the Question of Regularity," *Vision 20/00: Bridging the Negatives; Proceedings of the Semi-Annual Meeting of the Philalethes Society* (Toronto, 1989) 1-8; reprinted in *The Phylaxis* 25.4 (1989) 7-8, 13-14; and, in abbreviated form, in *The Virginia Masonic Herald* (January 1990) 7.

24. William H. Upton, *Light on a Dark Subject* (Boston, 1902) 214-215, quoted in Joseph A. Walkes, Jr., *A Prince Hall Masonic Quiz Book* (2nd edition, Richmond, Virginia, 1989) 85.

25. Quoted, Antonio de Morga, *The Philippine Islands*, translated by Hon. H.E.J. Stanley (Hakluyt Society, 1868), 122, in Kiernan, *Lords of Human Kind* 149.
26. Dona Torr, editor, *Marx on China, 1853-1860*, 1951, 3, in Kiernan, *Lords of Human Kind* 149.
27. *The Book of Knowledge* (Toronto, 1926) 4.1381; on the date, see *Book of Knowledge* 13.4814, 4818.
28. Lodge of Amity, No. 407, was Instituted in Canton, China, in 1767; Clegg, *Mackey's History of Freemasonry* 7.2289.
29. On early Freemasonry in China, see Tom Fripp *AQC* Vol. 92 (1979) 211; Christopher Haffner, *The Craft in the East* (Hong Kong, 1977, revised 1988) 39, 71, 90, 72, 70f., 432; see now also Haffner, "The First American Lodge in China," *The Philalethes* 43.2 (April, 1990) 12-13, 18; and the same author's Inaugural Address, "Eastern Masonic Frontiers Before the Union," to appear in *AQC* for 1991.
30. Haffner, *Craft in the East* 304; C.A. Sankey, *Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario* 126 (1981) 33A, quoted by W. McLeod in *AQC* 94 (1981) 234.
31. Robertson, *History of Freemasonry in Canada*, 1.208, 240.
32. Wallace McLeod, *The Bulletin* (April 1990), 6.
33. Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, *The Temple and the Lodge* (London, 1989) 181.
34. George H.T. French, "The Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God," *Masonology: An Anthology* (Austin, 1988), 67-77.
35. *Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario* 121 (1976) 56.

36. After Lawrence N. Greenleaf, "Hands across the Sea," in Carl Glick, editor, *A Treasury of Masonic Thought* (London, 1959) 127-128.



# MASONIC BOARDS OF RELIEF

by

R.W. Bro. Wayne E. Elgie

## INTRODUCTION

Last July at Grand Lodge, the Chairman of the Masonic Information for Heritage Lodge #730 A.F. and A.M. G.R.C. very diplomatically asked if I would consider presenting a paper at a Heritage Meeting. Had he not suggested the topic, I would have refused on the basis of lack of time. However, the topic does have a direct connection with a significant Masonic event that will be happening in our jurisdiction in late September in the City of Burlington.

To be able to share with masons, especially those in Heritage about one small, yet significant facet of our masonic heritage which appears somewhat unique to North American Freemasonry, and make it understandable, educational and enjoyable is the challenge I accepted from R.W. Bro. Edwin Drew and which I have the pleasure in sharing with you this evening here in the Oshawa Masonic Temple, at the 58th meeting at Heritage Lodge. To share with you the evolution of a truly unique North American phenomenon, which was adapted by our Grand Lodge to serve a very worthwhile purpose that no longer exists and without some environmental /social modifications, is or will be following the story of the dinosaur.

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\* Paper presented at the fifty-eighth Regular Meeting of The Heritage Lodge held on Wednesday, March 20th, 1991, in the Oshawa Masonic Hall, 91 Center Street S., Oshawa, Ontario, Bro. Elgie is a member of The Heritage Lodge.

## BACKGROUND

The vast dimensions of the form of a lodge from East to West and from North to South signify explicitly the universality of Freemasonry. The range of the masonic fraternity is universal the rights and privileges of the Order are universal, and the fundamental principles are also universal. From an address by our first Grand Master, M. W. Bro. William Mercer Wilson, in Ottawa on July 11, 1860 we are reminded of the second principle RELIEF, as in the ritual of Installation "....it carries relief and gladness to the habitations of want and destitution."1. All over the world Freemasons have been providing assistance to those less fortunate than themselves, a practice characteristic of the operative stone masons of the Middle Ages who were builders of cathedrals, abbeys and castles. Their regulations provided for a fellow mason by giving him a day's work or assistance to travel to the next project of a neighbouring lodge.

From the report of Grand Historian R. W. Bro. Wallace McLeod to Grand Lodge 1990, we read that in Scotland in 1670 the lodge at Aberdeen pledged itself to make contributions to the Mason Box, for the support of distressed brethren and the education of children. In England in 1686, a local historian in Wiltshire stated that whenever a Freemason falls into difficulty, the "brotherhood is to relieve him ". In Ireland in 1688 we have a report from Dublin that the members of the Fraternity of Freemasons had recently presented a "well stuffed" purse of charity to a destitute brother. In 1772 the Premier Grand Lodge in London decided that every lodge should take up a monthly collection for a general charity fund to assist poor brethren."2.

From the first Constitutions of Freemasons compiled by James Anderson and published in London in 1723, sub-section six relates to the behavior towards a strange Brother - " You are to cautiously examine him, in such a method as prudence shall direct you, that you may not be imposed upon by an ignorant false pretender, whom you are to reject with contempt and derision and beware of giving him any hints of knowledge. But if you discover him to be a true and genuine Brother, you are to respect him accordingly; and if he is in want, you must relieve him if you can, or else direct him how he may be relieved. You must employ him some days, or else recommend him to be employed. But you are not charged to do beyond your

ability, only to prefer a poor Brother, that is a good man and true, before any other poor people in same circumstances."

In the 1784 revised edition of Anderson's Constitutions, Laws relating to the General Fund of Charity clearly delineated the mode of petitioning, along with a form to be used by the petitioners. These were felt to be expedient in preventing improper persons from applying, and to ensure those who were deserving, from being disappointed of relief through any informality of application.

In Massachusetts in 1733, the by-laws of the first lodge in Boston specified that each member was to pay at least two shillings per quarter for the relief of brethren who had fallen on evil times. In 1781, in Nova Scotia, the Masters of three Halifax lodges were directed to act as a Charity Committee, to assist masons who had escaped from the American Revolution. In 1797, the Upper Canada Gazette told of a lodge, in Newark that had set up a fund to help Freemasons' widows and to educate orphans and children of indigent brethren. Throughout the Masonic world the pictures and practices are constant and universal. It has been said that the practice of relief among men has put civilization into the hearts of man, allowing him to survive through the ages. Such were the customs and expectations that migrant craft masons brought with them to the new world.

By the time of the American Revolution, over 41 lodges had been chartered from the Amazon to the St. Lawrence. Some were permanent such as in Boston and New York, while military lodges were given travelling warrants as early as 1732 by the Grand Lodge of Ireland. The introduction of Freemasonry to Canada is accredited to Erasmus James Philipps, initiated in Boston in 1737 and who as P.G.M. of Acadia was associated with the founding of a lodge at Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia in June 1738. Seven military lodges, each carrying a warrant issued by one of the three Grand Lodges, from England, Ireland and Boston helped spread Craft masonry from Quebec City to Michilimackinac. The establishment of lodges closely parallels the early growth and development of Canada's pioneer settlers who took full advantage of the lakes and rivers in selecting sites with easy access to communication routes to establish their homes and industries. Shortly thereafter, when their numbers were able to support a lodge, a masonic lodge was held and

eventually given permanent status in the town. Systems of trails grew to roads, water travel improved and later rail lines threaded across the province, providing connecting links between remote communities. At the confluence of such, villages and towns sprung up connected to larger seaport towns. In many the little blue lodge followed the building of the red brick church and the white painted school. This was the pattern of development across North America.

As America grew, and travel increased, and the number of masons increased, more masonic families required the assistance of others in their struggle for frontier survival as pioneers. As often as needed, masons would interrupt their own work to lend a hand to a member in need or his family. If a member died, his family would be taken care of by the lodge and neighbours. Frontier settlers were more often than not many miles away from their home town, the base of their departure, and likewise many a mason was numerous miles from his Mother Lodge. Thus if need be, he would turn to the nearest lodges for support, succor and aid.

By the 1850's there were thousands of brethren scattered across the habitable parts of North America engaged in almost every pursuit known to man at that time. (1885 est. 500,000) Calls for masonic help and assistance were becoming more frequent and the demands for charity required larger appropriations of time and money. Possibly the open-handedness of masonry had a tendency to make these demands larger and more frequent than they otherwise would be. Such circumstances presented a golden opportunity for "impostors, tramps or dead-beats" to ply their nefarious vocation of living upon others by concealing their true character. Former members, and those who observed the sincerity of masons helping each other conceived and put into practice the fraudulent seeking of funds and help.

While one must learn to take the sweet with the bitter as one journies through life, so also in masonry and in masonic charity. Often we have felt the pleasure and satisfaction of assisting those worthy. At other times we have found ourselves confronted by a variety of impostors or dead-beats, some who were admitted to Freemasonry through careless investigating committees, some whose character seemed good at the beginning but whose unworthiness, degradation, fraud or non-compliance caused the lodge to expel



them, and others who never were masons but who picked up some masonic phrases or memorabilia and although they could not prove themselves, applied at lodge room doors to the great heart of Masonry.

There were many different species of impostors then, not forgetting that they still exist today, but with more sophisticated means. Picture if you will:

The brazen, who had been a mason for so many years, had served the Craft right royally, and who demanded from the lodge immediate and substantial aid right now.

The meek and lowly, who cared for money only so far as it would buy him bread, and if not forthcoming, he would still pray for the brethren just the same. He was so full of the milk of human kindness and so overflowing of Christian charity himself, who could refuse this kind and gentle brother? Something must be given to him. With imaginary tears in his eyes, he thanked the brethren profusely, showering his pious blessings upon the lodge, departing with lodge funds in search of new turf and others who could be so easily imposed upon.

The homesick beggar, was one wanting to go to his dear home. If only once more he could behold the old church steeple in the sweet little village nestled beneath the mountain by the cascading waterfall. He would never, no never again leave from there to go forth in this cold heartless world. (to prey upon unsuspecting brethren) He would be well received and he could make shift, but how was he to get there? The fare was eight dollars and he had only four, but if the good brethren would contribute the balance, he would take the first train to his dearly beloved birthtown.

The wild one, was desperate, had not tasted food for two days and looked and acted wild. His eyes glared right through you like those of a ferocious animal. He claimed that this was positively his last appeal. This was the last time that he would ask the brethren for anything. If they refused, his fate be upon them all. He could no longer stand this

misery and torture so was going straight from the lodge to the nearest river, there to end his miserable existence forever.

The dying impostor, who ascended the stairs very slowly and was entirely out of breath when he reached the lodge room. He talked very slowly, his voice scarcely above a whisper. He frequently interrupted himself to take a breath. He suffered from asthma and was nearly used up with consumption (T.B.). He had a touch of Bright's disease besides a number of fatal diseases, the cure of which would require at least a dozen of the most approved advertised patent medicines available. He was attempting to collect a small sum of money sufficient to pay his funeral expenses, that was all. His days were numbered. He would not trouble the brethren much longer as he expected to be dead tomorrow or the next day. In fact the brethren were so fearful that he would die on their hands if they did not hurry and give him some cash so that he may get outside for some fresh air. This type was the most numerous and they had practiced so much that they became experts in dying, but never did.

The careless and homeless, was one entirely destitute, not a penny in his pocket, not a place to lay his head. No where to go, no money to buy a loaf of bread, who only wanted a quarter or even ten cents. If you offered to accompany him to a restaurant and to pay for a square meal he became most indignant and would ask "What do you take me for"? When he learned that there would be no money to be had, he would speedily depart, heaping curses and claims of masonic fraud on a well meaning brother.

These were but some of the types of unworthy men, with "heads to contrive and tongues to persuade who wandered up and down the continent with matchless tales of misfortune and distress which when told by their bearers would chill the heart and loosen the purse string".<sup>3</sup> It was a well established fact that a large proportion of what had been given as masonic charity was going into the hands of those not entitled to receive it. It was even worse than had it been thrown away, for it kept upon the roads and rails vast hordes who

lived upon this bounty, while needy brethren or their widows and orphans were left to suffer for want of the necessities of life. Besides depriving worthy masons and their families, these scoundrels were seldom punished for their crime. "The highwayman who robs is arrested and sent to prison, there to expiate his crime in penal servitude in a convicts garb. The fraud who robs a mason or lodge is no less a criminal, and should be made to suffer in a like manner".4.

This condition of affairs made it the imperative duty of masons and masonic lodges to protect themselves so far as possible against unworthy applicants for masonic charity. In small towns, and villages when there was but one lodge, the usual custom was for the Worshipful Master and the Wardens to be a Committee on Charity, with the authority to draw from the funds of the lodge. Because of the lack of proper skills and facilities for detecting impostors, frauds were not uncommon. In larger centres where more than one lodge was situated, some lodges received greater requests on their funds than others for a variety of reasons, from personnel to the nights they met, to their location in the city. In such cases Masonic Boards of Relief were established to which all applicants for assistance were sent. These Boards were generally composed of prominent brethren, each representing one of the several town or city lodges. These experienced brethren employed every means possible to dispense charity in a systematic manner, with one brother of unusual skill empowered to investigate all applications for relief. Usually the applicant was temporarily provided for until the investigator was satisfied whether help should be extended or not. The General Relief Fund to which they had access was created by a small per capita assessment on the membership of each subscribing lodge, quarterly or semi-annually. In this way the Fund was pro-rated among all lodges, each bearing its proportionate share. This plan for helping a worthy, brother and detecting the unworthy, as well as distributing the cost load equitably among the lodges was the best devised to help the sojourning mason with his problems. Such models were adopted very rapidly across America, some assuming additional responsibilities for delivering assistance and help to needy brethren and their dependants.

## THE CANADIAN SCENE

To appreciate the role of Boards of Relief, this writer has chosen to follow the development of the "Benevolence Growth Strand" through our Grand Lodge. At each of the early Communications of the Grand Lodge of Canada, Grand Master Wilson spoke in his addresses about the charitable characteristics of masonry and masons. In 1860, at Ottawa he spoke ..."one of the proudest duties of Masons both in their individual and collective relations is to embody and give practical value to the noblest principle upon which Masonry is founded." We can give Canadian masonry a local habitation and a name and teach the outside world to regard masonry and benevolence as interchangeable and synonymous terms "5. At the 1861 communication in London Ontario, Grand Master Herrington proposed the formation of a Board or Committee of Benevolence to whom all applications for relief should be referred. The Special Committee to whom was referred the consideration of matters contained in the address of the Grand Master, recommended that a Board or Committee of Benevolence somewhat similar to that existing in England should be established in Canada, having the power to grant relief to distressed masons on the application from a private lodge. Thus the foundation was laid for the Committee of Benevolence for the Grand Lodge of Canada. A notice of motion to assist in developing a Fund of Benevolence - in that every brother on his first appointment to any of the following offices should pay towards the Fund of Benevolence the sum of:

Grand Master:	\$50	Deputy Grand Master:	\$30
Grand Treasurer:	\$10	D.D.G.M.:	\$20
Grand Secretary:	\$10	Grand Wardens:	\$15
Grand Deacons :	\$ 5	Grand Chaplain:	\$10
Grand Registrar:	\$10	All other Grand Lodge Officers:	\$ 5

never came to fruition.

In 1865, under the Chairmanship of R.W.Bro Otto Klotz, the Benevolence Report noted the disbursement of 10 grants for relief totalling \$262 to be paid through the Worshipful Master of the petitioning lodge, or a Brother from that community who was known to the Committee. As practised today, it was then recommended



that in the future, all applications for relief should be accompanied with a statement of what had been done by the lodge(s) in aid of such applicants. The 1864 resolution, that annually, 10 percent of the total receipts of Grand Lodge be transferred to the Benevolent Investment Fund, ensured its growth, with \$663 being deposited in 1866. Semi-annual grants for applications from individual lodges were paid through the Worshipful Master, the District Deputy Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master or a Board of General Purposes member.<sup>6</sup>

The 1867 abstract statement of R.W. Bro James Seymour, D.D.G.M. for the Hamilton District notes 22 lodges privately relieved 21 cases of charity for an amount of \$287. His report also makes known that 10 percent of all receipts by the four Hamilton lodges, Barton #6, Strict Observance #27, St. John's #40, and Acacia #61 were specially appropriated to the Benevolent Fund managed jointly by their lodges.

From the 1867 report of the D.D.G.M. of the Eastern Townships we are told of a very commendable course of action by the brethren in creating a fund for the purpose of benevolence and they were making their appropriations therefore through a Committee appointed to consider and act upon all applications for relief, "such as now exists in and works well in some of the cities".<sup>7</sup>

## BOARDS OF RELIEF

The first reference to the operation of a Canadian Masonic Board of Relief appears in the 1868 Proceedings in the report of the acting D.D.G.M. for the Montreal District, although some may have been operating under a different name, yet with the same purposes. "The local Board of Relief, composed of representatives from all the lodges in the City of Montreal has been in active operation during the past masonic year and fully meets in every aspect the duties required of it. It is gratifying to find brethren hailing from different jurisdictions so cordially co-operating with us in the great work of dispensing charity to the needy and distressed brethren. A sum of \$400 has been paid out by the Board during the year, which is altogether exclusive of what lodges may have done during the same period in relieving those of their own membership who may have had

claims upon them". 8 The following year he again spoke glowingly of the work of the Montreal Board of Relief, which had expended nearly \$400 to transient brethren and to widows and children of masons. He also urged Grand Lodge to assume "greater liberality" in dealing with cases of distress brought before it, noting that when an application is made to Grand Lodge it is for the purpose of securing more substantial and permanent relief than would be expected from any local Board. Thus we have established the beginning of how and why Boards of Relief made application to Grand Lodge. In 1870 the first grants from Grand Lodge to be used by Boards of Relief, mainly for transient relief, were made to the Montreal Board of Relief \$100, the Toronto Benevolent Committee \$100 and the Hamilton Relief Committee \$50. The 1871 District Report praises the management of the Montreal Board, with funding from several city lodges and semiannual grants from Grand Lodge. The funds were used almost entirely for the relief of non-resident masons and those newly arrived from "foreign parts".9.

From time to time in the monthly publication of the Canadian Craftsman, Boards of Relief were warning the fraternity of impostors, tramps and swindlers, such as that by the Masonic Board of Relief of Toledo Ohio in April 1870. It not only listed the name under which the swindler was passing, but also issued a card with his personal description and a photograph. Claiming membership in Pierce Lodge #144 Calvert, Texas, this five foot. nine inch, Prussian by birth, by his own confession had been swindling the Craft wherever he travelled since arriving on this side of the Atlantic, early in 1868.

Sometimes Grand Masters were able to create Boards of Relief to assist in meeting the special needs of Masons at the time of catastrophe or disaster. Such was the case when the Great Fire befell the City of Chicago in October, 1871 and our Grand Master Seymour telegraphed \$2000 to the Grand Master of Illinois for the immediate relief of the Chicago brethren. His reply -"To meet the wants of the hour and to provide for permanent relief to the sufferers of our late conflagration, by virtue of my office, I have appointed and constituted a Masonic Board of Relief and I draw on your Grand Treasurer \$2000 in gold. May God Bless you and yours and enable us to repay by lasting gratitude, if not kind and coin your generous bounty" 10. Toronto District raised and forwarded \$700 on the second day of

that Great Fire (October 9, 1871). Interestingly that Board of Relief, organized for the distribution of funds, adjourned 'sine die' on June 24, 1872, and \$994 which was the share pro-rata of unexpended funds contributed by Canadian masons, returned. Grand Master Wilson in his reply expressed his feelings that the action of returning funds not required for the purposes they were contributed would ever afterwards be cited as a noble precedent for future guidance in all similar cases. The Board of General Purposes apportioned the funds among the contributors as follows:

Grand Lodge Benevolent Fund	\$485.63
Toronto Lodges	169.64
Wellington District	182.73
Wilson District	34.84
	<hr/>
	\$872.84

The 136 Benevolent Grants issued by Grand Lodge in 1872 included grants to the following Boards of Relief:

Montreal	\$200	Kingston	\$175
Toronto	300	London	75
Hamilton	200	Lodges in Winnipeg	50
Ottawa	150		

The 1873 condensed financial statements were the first to show the income and expeditures of several Boards of Relief receiving funds, from Grand Lodge. For example the Toronto Masonic Board of Relief showed 155 applicants receiving \$1422.25 and the source of funding being Grand Lodge and eight City lodges. Henceforth, by resolution, if a Board failed to submit a statement of income and expenses, support from Grand Lodge would be defaulted. The Board of General Purposes made it most clear that parties soliciting aid from the Benevolent Committee should be made through a lodge. The Board of General Purposes also recommended that wherever there was more than one lodge in a city or town, that such lodges form among themselves a local Board of Relief. Boards of Relief had received Grand Lodge's approbation, but their operations were subject to review, and publication in the Proceedings.



The best rationale given for the operation of a Board of Relief was defined by the Committee on Charity in the fraternal review of South Carolina, 1873. A Masonic Board of Relief had been organized in Charleston supplying a want long felt in that area where some 14 lodges, each separate and distinct had its own Committee or Charity. Experience showed that many applicants for relief, being masons from abroad and widows not connected with Charleston lodges would apply to various city lodges and frequently receive an undue share of masonic charity by reason of the lodge acting independently and without concert or information as to each other's actions. Unable to apply to 14 different Committees on Charity, worthy brethren from abroad failed to receive a proper amount of assistance. Having no central body with which to correspond, or other Boards of Relief or kindred masonic bodies to contact for information, lodges were subject to impostors, cheats and cowans. The Masonic Board of Relief was therefore organized to supply this want. It consisted of three representatives from each contributing lodge as well as representatives from the Grand Lodge Committee on Charity. The Board of Relief did not interfere with the charities of lodges to their members. It simply relieved them from all outside applications, by first dispensing charity to those worthy to receive it, and by means of rigid examinations, corresponded with kindred organizations in other States and Canada. In short by every means in its power, it detected and exposed unworthy applicants

We gleaned some local feelings from old minute books of Barton #6, Hamilton, St. Andrew's #16, Toronto and Ionic #25, Toronto. From St. Andrew's on February 26, 1884, "the lodge expresses its appreciation of the services of Bro. Spooner, Secretary Treasurer of the Masonic Benevolent Board who has faithfully discharged his duties as such for nearly 20 years". A letter was read on September 25, 1885 from the secretary of Britannia Lodge #170 in Seaforth thanking St. Andrews' brethren for attending the funeral of one of their members, and offering to pay the expenses of such funeral costs which may have been incurred by St. Andrews' Lodge.

The minutes of Ionic #25, on February 5, 1878 relate to the withholding of its subscription to the Masonic Benevolent Committee and withdrawal of its representative until such time as the lodges in arrears have paid their indebtedness. In June, 1880, the Benevolent Board laid before its members a scheme for the purchase of a burial



plot for worthy indigent masons. In December, 1885, the annual report of Ionic spoke to the remodelling of the General Board of Benevolence with income of five cents per capita per month.

Minutes from Barton #6 on June, 1873 record having received the extract from the Grand Lodge sub-committee on Benevolence, "that unless local Boards make regular detailed returns, no grants will be made by Grand Lodge." The January, 1874 minutes note the election of V.W. Bro. Richard Brierly as the lodge representative on the Masonic Benevolent Association of the Hamilton District. In May 1876 Barton received a communication from St. Alban's Lodge #200 in Mt. Forest warning all masons to be discreet in their conversations with an impostor named Evans, the proprietor of the Anglo-American Hotel in Mt. Forest. A District lodge under Barton #6, Strict Observance #27, St. John's #40 and Acacia #61 was opened for the purpose of celebrating the Festival of St. John the Baptist. It was called off, from whence the brethren formed in procession, marched to church and heard an excellent sermon. The collection of \$36.40 was in aid of the Benevolent Fund. A communication of July 12, 1876 from the treasurer of the Albany Masonic Board of Relief was read stating that \$10 had been granted a person giving the name G.T. Rochelle as a member of Barton. On April 11, 1877 a communication was read from the Ladies Benevolent Society of Hamilton thanking the Masonic fraternity for the donation of \$250 to the poor fund of the Society of which Barton had contributed \$54. On the Festival at St. John the Evangelist, the brethren marched to St. Thomas Church. The proceeds of the collection \$44.50 were again for the aid of the United Benevolent Fund. This practice still exists in Hamilton, where two Districts' Divine Services are held in the spring and fall, the proceeds of which are for the Hamilton Masonic Districts' Board of Relief.

A review of Grand Lodge Benevolent Committee reports shows that by 1886 disbursements of individual grants from Grand Lodge were now or had been made through the Secretary-Treasurer of the local Board of Relief in some 25 locations including Toronto, Hamilton, London, Kingston, Peterborough, St. Catherines, Ottawa, St. Thomas, Brockville, Chatham, Guelph, Stratford, Galt, Strathroy, Goderich, Windsor, Woodstock, Ingersoll, Barrie, Petrolia, Owen Sound, Niagara Falls, Belleville and Brantford. The Boards' incomes were basically grants from Grand Lodge, special grants for recipients

delineated by Grand Lodge, grants or per capita assessments by local lodges and chapters, and proceeds from special entertainment nights and church collections. When the Board of General Purposes abolished its half-yearly meetings in 1879, likewise Boards of Relief were not required to make semi-annual returns. However to guard against "too rapid a consumption of funds" the granting of two equal half yearly amounts continued to be paid to local Boards of Relief or lodges who could determine the distribution in one or two instalments. Appendix 1. - Returns by Local Boards of Relief 1892, points out the close supervision by Grand Lodge over the activities of each registered Board.

## MASONIC RELIEF ASSOCIATION OF UNITED STATES AND CANADA

In America prior to 1885 there was given by way of transient relief by lodges, Boards of Relief and private individuals approximately \$100,000 per year. In Ontario about \$4-5,000 per year was given to transients. Private donations never appeared on lodge or Board of Relief returns. With the ever increasing number of impostors preying upon the charitable nature of Freemasonry, the need for a centralized and systematic organization brought some 20 masons from across America and Canada to an informal meeting in Baltimore, Maryland in 1885. The indiscriminate giving of relief led to the formation of the General Board of Relief of the United States and Canada. Its objective was not to grant relief but, through a centralized system of enquiry, to inform lodges and Boards affiliated with the organization all over the continent of the names of the unworthy who were found applying for relief.

One year later in St. Louis, Missouri by-laws, and a centralized communications plan for the relief of worthy masons were adopted under the name of the General Masonic Relief Association of the United States and Canada. Four of the 19 delegates, were from Canada.

In his July, 1887 report as District Deputy for Toronto, R.W.Bro. John R. Robertson wrote with great pleasure of the work

of the Toronto Board of Relief whose disposal of funds granted by Grand Lodge and Toronto lodges was aided by affiliation with the General Masonic Relief Association of the United States and Canada. Using rigid means of examination laid down by the Association and assisted by the warning circular issued monthly from the head office in Baltimore, hundreds of dollars were saved in the District. Eight out of every ten applying for assistance were unworthy. In each case, the "wires" were used, in keeping with the International policy of wire first, limit assistance to one day at a time until deemed worthy. Robertson suggested that if Grand Lodge was to affiliate, at a per capita cost totalling \$194, every lodge in the jurisdiction would receive a warning circular. It so happened that he was Second Vice President of the Association, and the second annual meeting was slated for Toronto September 28 and 29, 1887 and thus our Grand Lodge has been a member ever since. At the third annual meeting in Louisville, Kentucky. First Vice President Robertson requested the Canadian delegates to lay the benefits of the Association before the Grand Lodges of Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, thus joining Canadian hands with the Association in exterminating frauds.

The Official Warning Circular, being much more expansive and detailed than the "wires", had helped expose 226 cases of frauds and tramps which the Secretary had received from 84 different sources. By 1892 over 1200 tramps had been disclosed. Appendix 2-Official Warning Circular #151, April 1898.

In his address at the eighth annual meeting in Boston on September 25, 1893 President J. R. Robertson, P.G.M. Canada, released many statistics about the Association now composed of seventeen Grand Lodges covering 191,000 members. The Grand Lodges of Ohio, North Dakota and Oregon joined while Wisconsin withdrew. His recommendation that meetings hereafter be held every two years was adopted and still applies today. R.W. Bro. Richard B. Hungerford of London was elected First Vice President.

One advantage of affiliation with the Association may be shown where the Toronto Board of Relief prior to 1886 paid out \$1,000 to \$1,200 per year in transient relief. From 1886 to 1896 the average was \$150 annually, a savings of \$8,000 in ten years. Scores of cases could be told like the tramp starting at Montreal with a stolen



certificate who was followed by the system of the M.R.A. west of Port Hope where he found that he was being tracked. Fearful of detection in Toronto, he made for Hamilton. He was identified by a railway official, a brother who had learned of the case in an eastern Ontario lodge. Word was sent to Toronto, as well as to lodges on the southern division of the Grand Trunk Railway. The impostor was caught and the certificate taken from him in London. This character admitted having taken in over 60 dollars in the six weeks besides his board and railway transportation. In 1897 the name was modified to the Masonic Relief Association of the United States and Canada (M.R.A.).

## **RETURN TO ONTARIO BOARDS OF RELIEF AND GRAND LODGE BENEVOLENCE**

An 1890 amendment proposed by Klotz and Robertson strengthened the purpose and use of Boards of Relief whereby all applications for relief from lodges situated in any city or town had to be transmitted through the approved local Board of Relief. Likewise the special grants to the applicants were distributed through the Secretary-Treasurer of the local Board accordingly. The following year specific financial statements by each Board of Relief were no longer printed in the Proceedings. Abstracts similar to Appendix #1 gave an overview of operations from time to time. Grants to local Boards for transient relief were much reduced but, special grants to individual applicants through the Boards increased greatly. By 1896, 153 grants were made through the W.M.s of lodges while 137 grants were distributed through local Boards of Relief, totalling \$9,830. The 1896 regulation that, unless the application had the actual signature and post office address of the applicant, it would not be considered, remained in practice until last year, in spite of the humiliation it may have caused those in need, or those who refused to sign. R.W. Bro. J.E. Harding introduced the practice in which all Boards of Relief and all lodges should report all transient relief granted on a form furnished by the Grand Secretary to the Secretary of the M.R.A.. He also introduced the recognition of Boards of Relief by our Grand Lodge when the By-laws adopted by the local Board must be approved by the Grand Master on the recommendation of the Chairman of the Benevolence Committee for Grand Lodge.



By the turn of the century and henceforth Benevolent Reports to Grand Lodge noted returns having been received from all local Boards of Relief. Grants distributed through Boards nearly equalled the number distributed by lodges thus lightening the work load of Inspector R.W. Bro. J. B. Nixon who was appointed in 1898 to investigate and report upon each case requiring assistance. From time to time Grand Lodge kept encouraging the establishment of Boards of Relief in towns where two or more lodges were located.

Applications for Grand Lodge Benevolence increased from 273 in 1900 to 696 in 1925, when more grants were disbursed by Boards of Relief (352) than by lodges (344) - of which 515 were widows' pensions. R.W. Bro. Thomas Rowe was appointed a full time salaried Supervisor of Benevolence in 1925 at \$3,000 per annum, while Nixon, 78 years old, who had served so efficiently for 30 years as Inspector of Benevolence gratis, was retained for his mature judgment and advice, as Advisory Inspector of Benevolence at \$1200 per annum.

With increasing membership and harsh prevailing economic conditions, Boards of Relief disbursed 412 of the 797 grants totalling \$117,075 in 1930. This led R.W. Bro. Frank Copus, as Chairman of Benevolence, to caution brethren on the carelessness at the door of the lodge in the too often admission of members without due investigation of their financial and family responsibilities. Seventy years earlier G.M. Wilson spoke of members joining under the mistaken impression that Masonry was a benevolent society and that, by joining, they were securing for themselves and their families certain guarantees that they would be taken care of in sickness and in health. If so, the brother so entering Masonry for material advantages of this kind was entering under entirely wrong ideas. Copus stressed that every committee of enquiry should be assured that "in all reasonable probability the applicant and his family will not become a charge upon the benevolent funds"

Throughout the early thirties, thousands found themselves faced with a degree of destitution they were powerless to overcome. Situations believed to be permanent were declared vacant without warning. Means of relief were devised but the bread lines grew longer like 1991 Food Banks Although unemployment relief rested primarily with the local lodge, some Boards of Relief addressed it on

a wider front by incorporating Employment Bureaus to serve their area as well.

## CONFERENCES OF GRAND MASTERS AND GRAND SECRETARIES

While Boards of Relief were continuing to thrive and serve an integral function for Craft masonry throughout North America under the centralized M.R.A., Grand Lodges were also beginning to take a concerted look at the needs of inter-jurisdictional relief and the sojourning masons and their concomitant difficulties. At the Seventh Conference of Grand Masters in 1934, a review of the methods of effective relief, and how to protect those worthy from the machinations of those who extorted relief without warrant, was presented and discussed. Times were changing and relief was taking on a greater meaning and scope. Improved means of transportation enhanced the migratory patterns of many. The 1928 Conference had stressed the need for continuous programs of education in the proper methods available for handling relief requests and investigations. Yet, in conclusion, the objects of the 50 year old M.R.A. which were:

1. The detection and publication of unworthy masons and impostors in the Bulletin.
2. Co-ordinating various forms of relief.
3. Prompt and effective methods of handling inter-jurisdictional relief.
4. An agency organizing Masonic relief in time of national disaster.
5. A forum for resolving Masonic relief problems.

were confirmed through the endorsement by this Conference of Grand Masters. In no way was the sovereignty of any Grand Lodge jeopardized. Unity in principle was a goal to be achieved by affiliating with the M.R.A..

Similarly at the first Conference of Grand Secretaries in 1927, as well in 1934, Inter-jurisdictional Relief was one subject addressed, under four major issues. First, the need for a definite policy on handling applicants for relief from outside America, the most troublesome being "Scotch brethren of the pound and shilling life

memberships". Second, the technicalities involved when a mason secures a demit, leaves for another jurisdiction completely ignorant of the fact that this cuts him off from all masonic assistance and then his widow in need asks for help. Thirdly, standardized dues cards and routines for maintaining permanent accurate membership records. Lastly, that each jurisdiction should care for its own relief even though the member be a resident of another jurisdiction, so that no jurisdiction is unjustly forced to be burdened of the relief which belongs to another. Sometimes suggestions become accepted practice custom, as at the 1942 Conference of Grand Secretaries, where the rights of a demitting members were clearly enunciated:

1. releasing him from regular attendance
2. releasing him from obedience to the by-laws
3. releasing him from attendance upon masonic processions
4. releasing him from payment of dues
5. depriving him from all benefits from lodge funds
6. depriving him from the right to refer any difficulties he may have with a brother mason to the lodge for adjudication.
7. depriving him of the right of a masonic burial (Memorial Service)
8. he is subject to call, upon special summons by a Masonic lodge within the jurisdiction he may be
9. he is subject to the general supervision which the lodge exercises over the morals of all masons within its jurisdiction
10. he is subject to the full force of his masonic obligation (except as stated in #2)
11. he has no claim for aid, counsel or advice from individual masons wheresoever dispersed and no claim by his widow or orphans after his death

Basically the rules governing a demitted Mason also govern the status of a suspended Mason.

The manner of handling a Burial Service as a courtesy to another Grand Lodge was reviewed in 1944 by the Conference of Grand Secretaries. This again helped to proclaim the work practiced by Boards of Relief as well as the Relief Lodges which handle deceased sojourner funerals, such as Louisiana Relief Lodge #1,

New Orleans chartered in 1854 and Vancouver Funeral Lodge #1 in British Columbia chartered in 1958.

A summary of Memorial Practices for sojourning masons was published after the 1972 Conference of Grand Secretaries and supported by the M.R.A. Arrangements handled by the lodge involved were deemed quicker, more satisfactory, and less expensive. If not prohibited by a particular Grand Lodge edict, the request for a Masonic Service by a member of a deceased brother's family and the possession of a current dues card, were felt to be sufficient authorization for a lodge to conduct services. Lodge addresses and contact persons can be arranged through the Grand Secretaries.

## **BOARDS OF RELIEF AND GRAND LODGE BENEVOLENCE**

The Toronto Board, organized on a much larger scale than most, devoted considerable attention to transients and to employment for those outside the Toronto area. They circularized their operation to all lodges in the Province and placed their services at the disposal of all lodges and Boards in Ontario. The M.R.A. was known not only for its unified work of transient relief for all Boards in United States and Canada, but also for furnishing current reliable lists of secretaries and addresses of all local Boards, thus ensuring prompt action. The secretary of the Kingston Board of Relief related how investigations occurred in his area. "The president of the local Board is the Chief of Police. If approached by a transient who claims to be a member of the Craft and I am not satisfied, I ask him to see the president. I inform him that he will find him at the City Building. Just ask for the Chief of Police. If he is genuine, the brother will go and see the president. If not, we have saved considerable sums thereby."

A special grant of \$500 was made by Grand Lodge to the Toronto Board in 1936 for the work of their Employment Bureau with unemployed brethren who when registered were directed to work throughout the Province. Appendix #3, shows the Employment Bureau ad from the July 1938 Freemason Magazine.



Until 1941, Benevolent Reports to Grand Lodge always delineated the specific distribution of grants separately by Boards of Relief or by lodges, with Boards still dispensing the majority. However, since 1942, the statement describing the modes of distribution was folded into one line "Grants distributed through local Boards and Lodges" The War Relief was receiving much attention and activity about this time. Benevolent Committee Chairmen would congratulate and commend the excellent work of those Boards of Relief who in their quiet way gave assistance to transients, comfort and cheer to those in temporary distress, employment help, visitation to the sick who were removed from relatives and at times helped in the burial of indigent masons and their widows.

By 1948 the number of active Boards of Relief in the Province numbered ten, located in Guelph, Hamilton, Kingston, London, Ottawa, Peterborough, Stratford, Toronto, Windsor and Woodstock. The Toronto Board changed its name to the Masonic Service Guild in 1950, a name more in keeping with their particular activities. R.W. Bro. George McQueen, succeeded M.W. Bro. R. Dargavel as Supervisor of Benevolence in 1952. Annually, he praised the good work of the few remaining Boards in assisting him in his duties of visitations and investigations. His plea for the creation of new Boards in city areas was not successful. With increasing social service benefits, combined with health care benefits and universal government pensions, came a decline in the number of requests for assistance from Grand Lodge and likewise a corresponding decline for similar services provided through Boards of Relief. One of their major purposes was waning.

## MASONIC RELIEF ASSOCIATION

Since its founding in 1885, the Masonic Relief Association has had nine Presidents from Canada, seven of whom have been P.G.M.'s of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario -Robertson 1891, Hungerford 1900, Dargavel 1936, Hearn 1950, Martyn 1966, Bailey 1982, and Nancekivell 1990-1991. Toronto has hosted the Biennial Conference on five occasions, 1887, 1931, 1949, 1967, 1983, and London did so in 1899. On September 25 through 27, 1991, Hamilton will host the 49th Biennial Conference at the

Venture Inn in Burlington. All are invited to attend the working meeting during Friday and the gala President's Banquet with our ladies that evening.

Like an invisible web stretching across the United States and Canada, the M.R.A. is an important part of the furnishings of every lodge in the two countries. It is a mystic tie which is woven to protect all masons, their widows and orphans from danger and need. It stands close at hand to each worthy mason in unexpected circumstances. The Association accomodates the sojourner, handles funeral arrangements, separates impostors from the worthy, makes hospital visits, comforts the widow and cares for the needy children of a mason.

More than 135 Boards and Bureaus are in active operation from coast to coast throughout North America, and are available 24 hours each day. Today, 42 Grand Lodges support the objectives of the M.R.A.. Currently, all Grand Lodges in Canada, save Nova Scotia, are subscribing members at a cost of 0.4 cents per member. This permits two voting representatives at the biennial conference and the distribution of the Bulletin to each lodge and Board within the jurisdiction. Appendix #4, Aims and Objectives of M.R.A..

Another publication issued annually through the support of the M.R.A. in conjunction with the Conference of Grand Lodge Secretaries is the booklet-List of Lodges Masonic. In addition to listing each Craft lodge under some 133 Grand Jurisdictions, a listing of current Boards of Relief, Employment and Service Bureaus of North America is found with a contact person, address and phone number.

## ACTIVE CANADIAN BOARDS

Having attempted to contact all 20 Boards of Relief, Guilds or Bureaus with a Canadian address, I am pleased to briefly highlight some of the current services and significant developments of the eight Boards that replied. I must sincerely thank the secretaries of each for the extra work they did to assist in the research for this paper. Their names appear with their Board in the Reference Section. Appendix #5, Letter sent to Canadian Boards of Relief.

## VANCOUVER MASONIC SERVICE BUREAU

The Vancouver Masonic Board of Relief was organized in 1897 for the purpose of providing a centralized Masonic agency to assist in the problems of the sojourner. In 1908 it took its present name. Since 1910 it has been affiliated with the M.R.A. Each of the 65 lodges in Greater Vancouver appoints one representative to the Bureau which meets monthly. The executive meets monthly. The Bureau is a registered charity and thus issues tax deductible receipts for donations to its annual appeal for sojourning brethren and widows, which totalled \$46,192 in 1990. It also receives grants from various Grand Lodges and distributes them personally to recipients living in the Greater Vancouver area. Currently, our Grand Lodge forwards over \$3,000 annually to three widows living in Vancouver, whose husbands were members of Eastern Ontario lodges. R.W. Bro. Gerald Churley, executive-director forwarded a vast amount of literature of the current services provided in that west coast Metropolitan Area. These include 53 manual wheelchairs for loan to masons or their neighbours should a mason sponsor the loan, plus crutches, walkers, commodes and canes. As an established medical aid supplier with discount pricing, the Bureau is the central source of supplies for lodge members' needs. It is used by the Craft for purchasing equipment which becomes the property of the Bureau after the member has no longer need of such. It publishes a monthly trestleboard for all lodges in the area. Assisting in the funeral arrangements of the deceased sojourner via Funeral Lodge #1, hospital visitations to sojourning brethren from outside Vancouver, detecting impostors and reporting them to M.R.A., administering the Evergreen Haven burial plot for deceased brethren in distressed circumstances, executor for estates and providing general information and assistance to visiting brethren are some activities provided in putting into practice the lesson taught in the northeast angle. In 1990 the Bureau disbursed over \$14,000 in relief through its full-time director, well skilled in social work and capable of addressing the needs of sojourning masons and their families. With assets totalling over \$180,000 it is the wealthiest of all the Canadian Boards.



## OTTAWA MASONIC BOARD OF RELIEF

Thanks to Secretary Treasurer, R.W. Bro. Alvin Styles, we have a copy of the original constitution and by-laws adopted at a special meeting on December 3, 1875. "Whereas, it is deemed expedient for the well-being of the Masonic fraternity of the City of Ottawa, that all Masonic Relief should be dispensed through a Central Benevolent Committee, thus reducing the cost of working out the great object of the Craft, promoting and cementing those fraternal and charitable feelings which ought at all times to be a distinguishing characteristic of the Brotherhood, it is resolved that on and after the first day of January 1876, all Masonic relief shall be granted by a Central Board or Committee, to be denominated the Ottawa Masonic Board of Relief, consisting of one or more representatives of each of the lodges in this city." So succinctly stated, and likely similar to the purposes of the other Boards known to have existed at that time in our jurisdiction. Current membership consists of representatives from 21 city lodges and one district lodge. It meets twice yearly. Initially funded by per capita assessment, the last 25 cents per capita was in 1979. The Ottawa Masonic Burial Plot founded in 1878, is a subsidiary body of the Board of Relief. Burial in the plot is restricted to indigent Masons. The Board makes enquiry into each application for assistance, grants such aid as deemed necessary, and publishes an annual report which each representative shares with his lodge. The W.M. of a lodge refers each case requiring attention to the lodge representative, who carries the situation to the Board. The Board is responsible to the lodge through the representative who has full authority delegated to him by his lodge.

## TORONTO MASONIC SERVICE GUILD AND BUREAU

Reference already has been made to the several entries in the early minutes of St. Andrew's #16 and Ionic #25 alluding to the General Board of Benevolence or the Toronto Central Benevolence Committee. It was organized in 1870 to equitably undertake financial assistance for any needy brother and to arrange matters of local benevolence. As Toronto expanded, the majority of lodges in



the Toronto Districts became members. As lodges commenced setting up their own Benevolent Funds for the services of their own members needs, assistance provided became restricted to transient Masons and members outside the Toronto Districts.

The annual report for 1883 notes:

193 cases of transient relief	-	\$874
53 cases of local relief	-	261
19 regular pensioners	-	635
loans, board, etc.	-	163
16 cases of widows and orphans	-	95
Income: St. James Church collection	-	161
Grants from Grand Lodge	-	635

Masonic Burial Plot - 2 deceased Masons strangers in the city. More transient relief is required every year, was noted. Difficulties in 1874 resulted in seven of the 14 City lodges ceasing to contribute support.

The Toronto Masonic Board of Relief was founded January 1, 1885, with each city lodge represented on the contribution of five cents per capita per month. The first Annual Report ending March 1, 1886 noted seven contributing lodges - St. Andrew's #16, Ionic #25, St. John's #75, Rehoboam #65, Wilson #86, Stevenson #218 and Doric #316. and four withdrawn lodges, Zetland #326, Ashlar #247, Orient #339 and King Solomons #22. On January 1, 1887 affiliation with M.R.A. was made at cost of one cent per capita, a duty then undertaken by Grand Lodge for all lodges under its administration. A balance of \$1,112 as of December 31, 1887 was due in large measure to the connection with M.R.A. enabling the detection of impostors and the practice of "wiring to the lodge from which the brother claims to hail.

In 1883 R.W. Bro. John Ross Robertson purchased a lot in the Mount Pleasant Cemetary to be known as the "King Solomon Plot", erected an unique monument in the centre, and by deed of trust conveyed the plot to the Craft in general. The grey granite Ionic column, surmounted by a sphere on which is affixed emblems of the Order in bronze, depicts the universality of the Craft. It is the burial

ground for indigent masons, legally and lawfully admitted members of Ancient Free and Accepted Masonry. In its first 57 years, 120 members were buried therein: England 34, Scotland 25, Ireland 14, Canada 38, U.S.A. 3, Channel Islands 3, Newfoundland 2, unknown 1.

Being located in the provincial capital of Ontario, a most active transportation centre, a major Canadian business centre, the major medical centre of the Province and a fast growing metropolitan area, the Toronto Board of Relief was often sought out for a variety of needs by transient and sojourning masons. Funded by annual per capita assessment of 10 cents from each City lodge, the 74th Annual Report in 1944 notes 110 applications for transient relief totalling \$839.45. Beside providing fraternal visitations to hospitals and homebound brethren and families, the Board continued to provide employment assistance to immigrant brethren. The Grand Lodge Benevolence Committee relied heavily upon the Secretary-Treasurer to investigate all applications for benevolence and in turn to visit and disburse such grants on behalf of Grand Lodge. Likewise, other Grand Lodges, including England, Ireland and Scotland utilized the Board to investigate and disburse pensions to widows of former members of those countries.

In 1950, the title of the Masonic Service Guild of Toronto was adopted, a name more in keeping with the variety of services offered from the permanent office at 77 York Street. Each May, an Annual Memorial Service is held at the King Solomon Plot. Hospital visits, local cases of need, disbursement of Trust Funds and Grand Lodge grants, assisting visitors and disseminating information were the major responsibilities of the Bureau under the leadership of a Chairman, the Secretary-Treasurer and representatives from the 130 lodges in the seven Toronto Districts. Since 1984 the Bureau operates from the home of the Secretary - Treasurer.

On January 1, 1990, by resolution of each body, the Masonic Service Guild of Toronto and the Central Masonic Bureau of Toronto united their functions into a single organization called the Toronto Masonic Service Guild and Bureau. The objects of : providing aid and relief to those worthy not under the jurisdiction of Toronto lodges; assisting in the administration of relief through Grand Lodge; or a subordinate lodge of any recognized jurisdiction;

performing any masonic service when requested, within the scope of its ability and not conflicting with Grand Lodge; and maintaining the King Solomon's Plot are still in effect. We wish them well in this blending of roles, as they address their current needs and purposes, through three meetings a year and an annual per capita assessment determined at the annual meeting. Secretary-Treasurer, V.W.Bro.Reg Medhurst was most helpful in providing information.

## **COMMITTEE ON BENEVOLENCE**

### **- PETERBOROUGH -**

Three members from the four city lodges constitute the Committee on Benevolence which handles all cases of relief in Peterborough. Each lodge has a Committee on Benevolence consisting of the three designated members mentioned above. These lodge committees report to the central body which does the investigation, and if need be takes the necessary action. Sometimes this is from Benevolent Committee funds, or if the need is considerable, the application form for Grand Lodge funds is completed, submitted to the respective lodge for approval and forwarded to the Grand Lodge Committee on Benevolence for consideration. Source of funds has been a per capita assessment until 1978, interest on capital and Grand Lodge funds if there is a major need of a continuing nature. The Committee meets at least twice yearly and considers itself to be the trustees of monies given for the sole purpose of masonic relief and benevolence and thus has no authority to donate to public charities however worthy. One exception deemed most deserving was a \$1500 donation to the purchase of a Cat Scan Unit for local use. Called the Board of Relief until 1970, the Committee is the central contact for Boards of Relief from United States and Canada. It regularly provides visitation and contact for sojourners and masons who have relocated in the area. Recent activities include assisting a member living out of province during his illness and with funeral costs, shingling the roof of a widow, painting a widow's cottage, installation of storm windows on a widow's home to reduce fuel costs and assisting in the purchase of an electric wheel chair. As R.W. Bro. H.A.Baptie, Secretary-Treasurer said in his very comprehensive supportive material for this writer, "We do what has to be done."



## **MASONIC SERVICE GUILD OF SUDBURY-MANITOULIN DISTRICT**

After 12 years of meetings, the Masonic Bureau of the Sudbury-Manitoulin District, consisting of representatives from five city lodges commenced operation January 1, 1963. At the September, 1965 meeting it was explained how the Bureau could also operate as a Masonic Service Guild, modelled after Toronto, to inform the various lodges of a brother who might be confined to a local hospital. By 1966, the Guild had registered with the M.R.A. and was thus recognized throughout North America. The Bureau and Guild operate as one body, hold joint meetings and share the same officers who are elected each January. The Guild functions as the District contact for cases of relief in and from the Sudbury-Manitoulin area. Our appreciation to R.W. Bro. Warren Mulack Secretary-Treasurer for providing copies of the History of the Bureau and Guild.

## **KINGSTON MASONIC BOARD OF RELIEF**

R.W. Bro. David Stevens very kindly met with this writer last fall to review some of the benevolent happenings of the Kingston area. With support and leadership from St. John's lodge #3, a hospital room was furnished in 1947. Since then, assistance has been given to hospitalized brethren, wheel chairs purchased, subsidies paid for special operations, and \$2700 donated to the Children's Section of the Hotel Dieu Hospital. In 1980, under the leadership of the District Chairman of Benevolence, support was given for furnishing another hospital room. The Board is registered with the M.R.A. and carries out its objects.

## **LONDON BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION INC.**

The Board of Benevolence was organized in September 1871 by the city lodges and maintained by half-yearly grants of \$25 per lodge. In 1883, the original masonic burial plot purchased in 1865 in St. Paul's Cemetery being closed, a new lot was procured in Woodland Cemetery in perpetuity for brethren and their wives. Each May, an



annual Memorial Service is observed around the Memorial Stone bearing a quotation from Kipling, "Till the Master of all good workmen shall set us to work anew." On either side are two smaller ashlar, one smooth and the other rough.

Membership is open to one representative from each Craft lodge in the two London Districts. The current numbering is 15. Being formed for charitable purposes, it receives funds created or donated by will, deed, trust, or gift and invests the same as a trust. From the interest of investments, funds are disbursed for charitable or eleemosynary purposes. Individual member assistance is given on a matching basis with the brother's lodge. Examples of recent benevolent grants include those given to Canadian Diabetes Association \$4500, Project H.E.L.P. \$5,000, M.R.A. \$150, Hospital Beds \$180, Wheelchairs \$900, Project H.O.M.E. \$500, Parkwood Hospital Bldg. Fund \$500, Mission Services Van \$8,000. Thanks is given to R.W. Bro. Hugh Cree, President and acting Secretary-Treasurer for his prompt and thorough assistance in sharing the above. V. Wor. Bro. Orton Logan has been the central force of this Association for many years.

## **HAMILTON MASONIC DISTRICTS' BOARD OF RELIEF**

As early as 1855, Barton, St. John's and Strict Observance lodges developed a combined plan to dispense masonic charity in a systematic manner. Each lodge pledged to contribute annually 15 cents per capita of membership in order to provide a fund for the relief of worthy brethren in distress, their widows or families, in a manner to be decided by the committee in charge. For some undisclosed reason, the plan failed to materialize. Four years later, a similar co-operative plan named "The United Masonic Benevolent Fund" supported by an initial donation of \$10 from each lodge and an assessment of 10 percent of the annual receipts of each lodge plus the collections from the divine services in connection with the Festivals of the St. Johns' became operational.

R.W. Bro. Seymour's report of 1867, made note of the "Hamilton Benevolent Fund" supported by 10 percent of all receipts from

the four city lodges Barton #6, Strict Observance #27, St. John's #40 and Acacia #61. The 1869 Grand Lodge Report on Benevolence refers to \$50 being appropriated to the "Hamilton Relief Committee", while the 1871 report includes a \$100 grant to the "Hamilton Board of Relief" and the minutes of Barton Lodge, January, 1874 note the election of V.W.Bro. Richard Brierly to the Board of Directors of the "Masonic Benevolent Association of the Hamilton District". Subsequent minutes of Barton #6 on May 8, 1876 and April 11, 1877 record proceeds from the collections of District Church Services amounting to \$36.40 and \$44.50 were in aid of the "United Benevolent Fund Board" Whatever the name, the Hamilton area lodges were organized under a centralized body, for the purpose of distributing masonic benevolence. Located in an active industrialized port city and also the seat of Masonry in Ontario, the Hamilton Masonic Board of Relief assumed its name about the time Grand Lodge started subsidizing grants to transient brethren, and the M.R.A. was beginning. Membership consisted of one elected representative from each city lodge and those lodges holding concurrent jurisdiction. Funds were received from subscribing lodges at five cents per capita, and proceeds from semi-annual church services. Its object was the extension of aid and financial assistance to transient brethren, their wives, widows and orphans. Unworthy applicants were to be, and still are, reported to the M.R.A.. In 1908, \$1,000 was sent by the Hamilton masons to distressed members of the Order in Fernie B.C. which was destroyed by forest fire.

In 1931 a burial plot was purchased in Woodland Cemetery overlooking Hamilton Bay. It currently contains 38 bodies of indigent masons and their wives, the last interment being made in 1990. It could hold 148 more. In 1963, a registered charitable number was acquired which allowed for donations to be Income Tax deductible. Through the sixties and mid seventies, lodge per capita payments and collections from twice-yearly church services far exceeded the expenditures for transient relief and administration. No per capita lodge assessment has been asked since 1972. Hospital visitations to sojourning masons became a regular function while transient needs decreased.

In 1972 the Board of Relief Church Services were combined with the Districts' Church Services, to become the Districts' Divine

Services in support of the Board of Relief. With concurrent jurisdiction, all lodges in the three Hamilton Districts became eligible for membership.

In 1978, the phrase "and such other charitable purposes as the Board shall determine" was added to its object, in a hope of addressing a wider field of human needs beyond the purview of transient masonic relief. This has had a two-fold multiplier effect in that donations have annually increased as have the grants to a variety of needs, both masonic and non-masonic. Appendix #6 is a copy of the invitation to a Divine Service, accompanied with the amounts of Benevolence granted in 1988 and 1990. The Board has made grants to the maximum of \$10,000 for local children requiring bone marrow transplants in American cities and for research in Pediatric Hematology and Oncology at McMaster University. Without neglecting its masonic responsibilities, the Board also considers requests brought by any one of the elected representatives to the twice-yearly meetings. All requests are investigated by a committee appointed by the executive, prior to presentation for open vote. Through regular payments to M.R.A., each member and his lodge receives a copy of the Bulletin.

The Board is pleased to host the 49th Biennial Conference of M.R.A. this September 25-27 in Burlington, with generous support from the Toronto Masonic Guild and Bureau, the Waterloo District brethren and Grand Lodge. Appendix #7, The Bulletin, March 1991, announcing the 49th Biennial Conference. The Board maintains a supply of wheelchairs and ambulatory aids, and will always procure new equipment when needed

In recent years large sums have been donated to city agencies, food banks. Secretary-Treasurer V.W.Bro. Joe Hobson, issues many income tax deductible receipts as he assists in the direction of a very active Board. Thanks Joe.

## CLOSING

Since 1964, annual reports of the Committee on Benevolence to Grand Lodge have lauded and complimented the work of the Boards of Relief in larger Ontario centres. The administration of grants from



Grand Lodge by Boards was last mentioned in 1977. With the introduction of District Chairmen of Benevolence in 1970, and concerted efforts to have private lodges assume greater responsibility for their own, the purpose of utilizing local Boards of Relief for the investigation and distribution of Grand Lodge Benevolent Grants has ceased. Before the turn of the century at least 25 Ontario Boards were serving an integral function in the kaleidoscope of masonic activities locally, provincially and internationally, a truly unique North American phenomenon. Since then, some have ceased. Others have chosen to remain operational under the by-laws established at their founding with few or no amendments. Some have folded two distinct masonic functions into one body. Others have for various reasons, amended their by-laws minimally, but in keeping with what would allow their Board to address a variety of issues, masonic and non-masonic, local, provincial and international. Each is somewhere on a spectrum from active with vitality and purpose at one end, graduated to expiring and inert at the opposite. Internationally the picture is similar. One hundred and eighty three Boards were registered with the M.R.A. in 1967, while today the number is 135. However, there is an up-beat note as well in that the number of supporting Grand Lodges of the M.R.A. has grown to 42. They must feel their needs are well served for the minimal cost involved. Should masonic wisdom dictate that we look at alternatives for Boards to serve, or should they be permitted to take the same course that firemen followed on diesel locomotives?

As Northerners, we are becoming more like migratory birds in our search for the sun and warmer climates during harsh Canadian winters often after retirement. Life in another state and in another country progresses smoothly until an emergency strikes, such as illness, death or accident. Panic becomes a by-product as the gap between costs of care and income increases. It is usually at this point that the fraternity is thought of as a resource, but how does one access its aid? Granted, there is a fairly high turn around in lodge attenders over a short period of time. Should a perpetual systematic method of educating our membership of the role of masonic relief be ongoing? Since February, 1859, the founding date of the Brooklyn New York Board of Relief, administrators of Boards of Relief have responded in the broadest sense of the term, as general practitioners in the field of masonic assistance. Is there a role for this general practioner in the 21st century?



When abusers of masonic privileges began to prey upon masonic brethren and their lodges throughout North America, local Boards of Relief, carrying various titles developed from necessity to reduce and to destroy such nefarious activity. At the same time they equitably and systematically distributed succor to those deemed eligible according to the early Constitutions, Regulations and Charges.

In summation, my brethren, I have attempted to present the rising, the plateauing and in some cases the decline of a North American phenomenon, Masonic Boards of Relief. Of necessity and relativity, customs and practices of benevolence and charity, especially in our Grand Jurisdiction had to be woven into the fabric of Masonic Relief, along with date lines. Having airplanes capable of speeds three times that of sound, satellite communications beaming the accuracy of live warfare half a globe away into our homes are Boards of Relief relative to present day Masonry? "I say yes - emphatically yes" Beside carrying out the many functions such as those done by the Hamiton Board of Relief amd raising sums of money, there is so much need out there for other avenues of Masonic Charity. possibly greater now than ever. Some will be channelled in an organized systematic fashion. And some, possibly the most important form of charity, will be given in a more personal and individual way. Money alone does not constitute charity. A smile, a warm handshake, an encouraging word, a few moments of your time can set a brother on his way with a new determination. In a great many cases these form the greatest "Relief" a man can receive. It costs so little, yet can mean so much. Possibly someday, a multi-purpose Masonic Service Centre will be located in every major city across north America, modelled on the Vancouver Masonic Service Bureau format, a vision for the future.

The task of tracing the evolution of Boards of Relief has been somewhat of a challenge, and a greater consumer of time than originally planned, yet somewhat of a pleasure as well. May the broad mantle of masonic charity cover my many literary failures, sins of omission and lack of further research. My family have been very understanding. Thank you Jayne and thank you Jennifer. To Donna, your support in "word processing" has been excellent.

When asked "What is the duty of a Mason to his brother?", Former President of the United States of America and Past Grand Master of New York, Dewitt-Clinton in 1793 replied, "To bring relief to his brother and to care for his family in the time of need." The universal element in Masonry is a living and shaping ideal, a mighty ethical and spiritual power working for the extension of social morality into every walk of life, as well as for the cultivation and improvement of the human mind."

"There is a destiny that makes us brothers,  
None goes his way alone,  
All that we put into the lives of others,  
Comes back into our own."

Anon

So mote it be!

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## APPENDIX

(It was not possible to reproduce the following in the format of these Proceedings)

1. Returns by Local Boards of Relief 1892 Proceedings
2. Official Warning Circular No. 151, April 1, 1898 by the Masonic Relief Association of United States and Canada
3. Toronto Masonic Employment Bureau - July 1938, Freemason Magazine
4. Aims and Objectives of the Masonic Relief Association of United States and Canada, 1989
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London	- R.W. Bro. H. Cree
Ottawa	- R. Bro. A. Styles
Peterborough	- R.W. Bro. H.A. Baptie
Sudbury	- R.W. Bro. W. Mulack
Toronto	- V.W. Bro. R.Medhurst
Vancouver	- R.W. Bro. G. Churley

Wayne E. Elgie



## **REVIEW OF PAPER TITLED MASONIC BOARDS OF RELIEF**

**Reviewed by**

**R.W. Bro. Kenneth L. Whiting**

Worshipful Master and Brethren, my thanks to R.W. Bro. Ed. Drew for providing me this opportunity to review R.W. Bro. Elgie's paper "Masonic Boards of Relief".

Indeed as Supervisor of Benevolence for Grand Lodge, I have had the opportunity of working with Bro. Elgie on the Benevolence Committee of Grand Lodge. As such I am always cognizant of not only his knowledge and oratorical capabilities but his background and concern in those areas covered by his enlightening paper.

R.W. Bro. Elgie's formal training and his occupation with the Hamilton Board of Education have given him a clear insight into the needs and welfare of others. This insight has been well honed in his former capacity of President of the Hamilton Relief Association and has provided considerable insight for his extensive research for this paper.

R.W. Bro. Elgie is to be congratulated for presenting to this gathering of Heritage Lodge an area of Freemasonry largely unknown to most of its adherents.

The approach to the historical sketches of the various Boards of Relief in Ontario is skilfully woven through a history of assistance and charity to sojourning Masons as well as, in his words, "imposters, tramps and dead-beats". The vignettes he has described on the skills and ploys of these "dead-beats" were unfortunately all too frequent in our early history. Perhaps unknown to most brethren today, there are still unworthy men attempting to separate Masons from their money and property. We continue to get notices from other Grand

Lodges regarding attempts by con artists to obtain wages that are not their due.

If you think "imposters and dead-beats" are gone, a thing of the past, let me share with you what happened in 1990.

A recent letter to our office from the Grand Lodge of the State of Washington warned of a Brother and his two sons from India who had resided for a year in the State of Washington while he completed some Post Doctoral work and his sons attended American schools. During this period he affiliated with one of their lodges and shortly afterward requested assistance from three of their brethren for either loans or guaranteed accounts in a local bank to satisfy the Immigration and Naturalization Services requirements for sufficient funds to support the family during their temporary residence in the U.S.A. The Grand Secretary reports that in late July or early August this Brother left the area leaving no forwarding address or contact or giving any assurance to those brethren who had advanced him funds. Just before departing he withdrew the remaining funds in the account guaranteed by one of their members in the amount of some \$10,000.00 leaving their brother having to pay the bank.

On communication with the Grand Lodge of India, they found out he may be heading for Toronto and warned us of such. Interestingly enough, he did show up in Toronto and made contact with one of our lodges and was again befriended. He worked his ploy with one of the members of this lodge who loaned him \$2,000.00 and also loaned his son a personal computer. Then the disappearing act again, with one difference, the son was located at York University and with the aid of Toronto's finest was persuaded to give the personal computer back to it's rightful owner. Charges have been laid and my understanding is, they will be heard later this spring.

In the meanwhile, we have received further correspondence from the Grand Lodge of the State of Washington that the brother was charged with Unmasonic Conduct, a trial held and he was expelled from the Order. This information has been forwarded to the Grand Lodge of India for whatever action they may wish to take against the brother in his own country.

This is one storey, and there are others, possibly brings me to the point that as Supervisor of Benevolence, should we be offering more information through Workshop Training to our current Masons about how they or we should be cautioned about the dead-beats and imposters of present day Masonry.

The history of the Masonic Relief Association of the United States of America and Canada is well documented in this paper and probably of much interest to our brethren to learn that the Grand Lodge of Canada has played such an active roll in that history, particularly in providing the expertise of seven of our Past Grand Masters up to and including Past Grand Master Dr. Eric Nancekivell, who is the current President.

R.W. Bro. Elgie's investigation into the current Boards of Relief, Guilds or Bureaus has presented to the listener and reader a greater feeling for the benevolent or charitable work of some of these boards within Canada.

The questions asked by R.W. Bro. Elgie, i.e. "Is there a roll for Boards of Relief in the 21st Century", and "Are Boards of Relief Relative to Present Day Masonry" can provoke much and varied thought amongst the brethren of a fairly affluent Masonic Society today, depending on each individuals association with charitable or benevolent purposes in societ or within the Craft.

The very fact that Bro. Elgie chooses to answer these questions himself rather than to leave them hanging is a testament to his caring and concern. I must agree with him in this concern for Masonic Relief and Public Support and our assistance may well yet be the brightest light that can shine from under our bushel.

The research effort and well prepared presentation by R.W. Bro. Elgie makes this paper unique to our brethren, mainly because the topic has been too little known and too little exposed for too long a time.

Thank you Wayne for providing for all of us that "daily advancement in Masonic Knowledge".

Kenneth L. Whiting

## FROM TIME IMMEMORIAL\*

by  
V.W. Bro. Allan J. Cohoe

The title of this paper, From Time Immemorial, is taken from the opening and introduction of the Master Elect in the ceremony of installation of a Lodge Master. It stirs one's imagination as to what happened before we can remember, or before records and knowledge existed; those being the dictionary meanings of immemorial.

I shall endeavour to indicate some of the paths by which the principles and truths of our Masonic Order may have come across great spaces of human intellectual endeavour and reached 18th Century Western Europe. Did the Old Charges grow of themselves? Did they start from nothing as they were found? It is not likely.

The Old Charges have been well documented as to probable origin and connection to our Accepted Masonry of today. However, where did these ideas originate? Can we say that the King James version of the Bible was the sole source? It is to rule and govern ourselves as individuals thus making us agreeable to acceptance of the Supreme Being as the Creator of the universe.

Can we assume that the various V's. O. T. S. L. in use around the World today were the total inspiration for Freemasonry? Then consider the Sikh's Sri Guru Sahib; the Hindu Bhagavad Gita; the Zoroastrian Khordeth Avesta; the Moslem Koran; the Old Testament of the Jews; and the Buddhist Phammapada. Does our acceptance of all who believe in the Great Architect of the Universe and accept certain principles of that belief prove that the idea of Freemasonry began at the establishment of these various religions?

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\* Paper presented at the Regular Meeting of The Heritage Lodge and hosted by Union Lodge No. 9, G.R.C., Kingston, Ontario, on Wednesday evening, May 15, 1991.



Again it does not seem likely. Since we are not a religion, but a philosophy there seems no reason to add creedal restrictions to our universal brotherhood. This makes all good men of these faiths acceptable as brothers within our Order. I raise these questions to pursue a trail I think may have had a profound effect on the content of our Order's Work and the development of our principles.

There is nothing new in my paper. My critics will be quick to point out that my sources are not original. I have relied heavily on Edward Gibbon's (Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire) and Boethius's (The Consolation of Philosophy). My only plea is that I do not have the libraries to which these writers had access, nor do I have a command of Greek and Latin as they did. The following facts cannot always be in order but, I shall endeavour to relate them to orderly human progress as much as possible. I hope reviewers, more scholarly than I will be able to enlighten me as well as our other members as to the soundness of my theories. It is my belief that the information of this paper will prove valuable to many knowledgeable Masons who have not had the benefit of concentrated philosophical or historical studies.

Pythagoras, whose system is referred to in the lecture of the E. A. D., has been credited with inventing the word philosophy. The meaning may be interpreted "love of wisdom, a seeker after truth". Pythagoras developed an association which lasted for about one thousand years and ended only when the group began to infiltrate into, and involve itself with the political structure. Then it was quickly destroyed.[1] That was about 500 A.D. just when Boethius came on the scene.

Pythagoras is believed to have absorbed the Arabic numerals when he served in the military in Asia Minor as a young man. This of course led to the development of arithmetic and geometry. That Pythagoras was the first of many is evident from the fact that he died c. 500 B.C. and the following were born later as indicated by the figure after their names: Socrates c. 31 years later; Sophocles 5 years later; Plato 83 years later; and Aristotle 116 years later. These

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\* Paper presented at the Regular Meeting of The Heritage Lodge and hosted by Union Lodge No. 9, G.R.C., Kingston, Ontario, on Wednesday evening, May 15, 1991.

became the vigorous philosophic group in ancient Athens. However another six were leaders in drama, oratory, and government, just within about a century and a half. Most of these skills are important components of our Order. We rate them the liberal arts and sciences in our Work.

Albert G. Mackey's (Encyclopedia of Freemasonry) is available to most Freemasons I believe, and points out that Pythagoras ran a school in which there were three levels of membership. The first were called mathematicians and studied the exact sciences. The second group were named theoreticians who studied the knowledge of God and the future state of man. The third and highest group admitted only a few of the brighter members of the followers of Pythagoras. They were known as esoterics. There seems little doubt that Freemasonry in due course borrowed some of these ideas and perhaps the three degrees.

I have already mentioned Arabic numerals which made possible the development of arithmetic, one of Masonry's sciences. It is only proper here to mention that many of the written works of the Athenians disappeared and it was much later that western scholars discovered in Arabic literature the translations from Greek of missing Grecian work.[2] We, as Masons, owe a debt of gratitude for the rediscovery of this early wisdom. Obviously it came from the East and spread its benign influence to the West.

How was it spread to us? This brings us to examine the work of Boethius a top Roman civil servant. I propose to give some details of his life before I touch on his work. This will remind those who are already trained in philosophy and also assist others to understand how it happened. A Roman boy was born c. 480 A. D. One of his given names indicated that he was of the ruling aristocracy. His surname was Boethius.

Boethius, early in his life became an orphan of obvious wealth and rank. He must have had a good guardian. He may have spent some of his first 18 years in Athens where he learned Greek, absorbed the knowledge and customs of that society which was at the end of about a millennium of advanced culture. He was well finished in the Latin classics and reputed to have an unusual ability to write in the language of the ordinary citizen who by then was beginning to use early Italian rather than Latin. The sources he quotes in his

writings and his references to his library, while in prison, indicate he was not only well read in the classics and literature of his time but also could recall them without the actual texts.

Boethius married the daughter of Symmachus, a wealthy Roman who had been a consul and senator and, was Boethius's guardian during his minority. They were good friends. Boethius was assured of a successful career. He did become a consul, a senator and lived to see his two sons become joint consuls - an unheard of honour as consuls were supposed to keep watch over each other. Even in those days the Romans were wary of nepotism and conflict of interest.

All went well until 523 A.D. when the Emperor began elimination of the senators for some real or imagined slight. The crumbling Empire suffered these political assassinations quite regularly as its centre had gradually slipped over to Constantinople and Northern Europe, now growing to be a power on its own. Boethius, as a well informed individual was asked if he knew about the so called plot and replied that if he had known, the Emperor would never have found out. That was enough. He was clapped into prison and knew from experience that nothing could save him from a cruel death. That was delayed about two years in which he wrote (The Consolation of Philosophy) as a time filler awaiting his certain execution.

I am not the only person impressed with the value of this book which is still in print. Some 350 years after Boethius's death, Alfred the Great had it translated into Old English for his Anglo-Saxon subjects; Chaucer and others did it into Middle English. There were translations into medieval German, Old French, versions in Greek, Middle Dutch, Old Provencal, Italian and Spanish. Later, in the sixteenth century, Queen Elizabeth I turned her hand to "Englishing" the (Consolation) [3] According to the reference she claimed to have done it in twenty-seven hours. That is difficult to believe. But, who would dare to contradict her! I am inclined to think this may have made Britain and Northern Europe receptive to Freemasonry and its antecedents by that time.

It is time now to relate Boethius's work to its influence on Freemasonry. To fill in his time in prison he imagined he was visited by women who personified such human desires as Fame and Fortune. Perhaps an ancient Grecian influence from his Athenian schooling which might have included an unconscious belief in nymphs. Then



suddenly he notices an awe-inspiring woman of superhuman qualities standing at his bedside who peremptorily orders him to get rid of these other "hysterical sluts" because she, the new apparition and he have known each other for a long time and he is worthy of better thoughts. Her name is Philosophy. And from now on they carry on an imaginary dialogue about principles which rule many of our lives and actions today.

In one of his imaginary conversations with Philosophy, Boethius complains about the wheel of fortune having lost him his position, his fortune, access to his library, and utter desertion by his friends.[4] She points out that if a wheel does not turn it is no longer a wheel and why should he expect to stay at the top while other deserving people need the turning wheel of fortune to come into their own. Our Masonic lecture in the second degree explicitly mentions he who is on the lowest spoke of fortunes wheel. The format is almost a quote from the (Consolation). It does not directly connect to Freemasonry as do the Old Charges but seems to me to be an inspiration for our Work.

Boethius was not the first to use the simile of fortune's wheel. Cicero who lived almost 600 years earlier was fond of the expression according to a footnote in the (Consolation). Just another example of Boethius as an intellectual funnel to gather and then pass the wisdom into the future for us. There is no proof that Cicero originated the expression. Wheels are believed to have been developed about 5,500 years ago. Early carvings seem to indicate that they were at first solid discs. Wheels with spokes were probably developed in Mesopotamia about 3,000 B.C. Presumably the expression "on the lower spoke of fortune's wheel" would have been invented after that time. Cicero could have heard of the expression from Egyptian sources. We do not know for sure the originator of that fine descriptive expression.

There are many expressions in the (Consolation) which compare to similar expressions in Masonic work. Some examples from the (Consolation) are:

(Chance	Knowledge
Evil	Luck
Fate	Pleasure
Fear	Power



Freedom  
Glory  
Good  
Grief  
Happiness  
Honour  
Ignorance  
Joy)

Providence  
Punishment  
Truth  
Virtue

Then there are phrases which, when one allows for about 1,200 years adjustment to language, have a familiar ring. Let us examine a few:

(Founded on reason  
Blindness of ignorance  
Execution of the work  
Craftsman  
Circle  
Freedom of the will  
Power of judgement  
Contemplation of the mind of God  
Light of truth  
Darkened by the mists of ignorance  
Slavery  
Supreme providence)

Now let us examine a few Masonic expressions. These are a small list of the many available to anyone familiar with our Work.

(Communicating happiness  
Paths of happiness  
Cultivation and improvement of the human mind  
Peace and cultivation to the human spirit  
Opens the sources of knowledge  
Widens the sphere of human happiness  
Cultivate and enlighten the mind  
Induce the habit of virtue  
Etc.)

There is no doubt in my mind that Boethius was one of many who made possible our Masonic Order as it quickly developed in the Seventeenth Century and became concrete in the early eighteenth

century with the formation of a Grand Lodge in 1717 in London, England. Our close adherence to that formation then makes us a beneficiary of Boethius also.

Lest I give the impression that all of our advancement depends upon the Roman Empire, I shall now bring in other things that seem to rise from time immemorial.

As the Roman Empire began to crumble, and indeed it was well on its way when Boethius wrote his last book, political power moved to Byzantium and also to the vigorous peoples of Europe lying north of Italy. It is not easy to trace the perimeters as power plays destroyed all the then known borders between civilization and the so called "barbarians". Things were very fluid. But before we come back to Europe I should like to look at events in Constantinople where religion divided from Rome. It was an opulent era for the Roman Empire based in that new eastern city and was greatly engrossed in Asia Minor. Word of the success of these new religions became known to pagans on their frontiers and Olga, the grandmother of Vladimir (Grand Duke of Kievan Russia, 978 to 1015 A.D.) sent ambassadors to examine the religions of Rome, Byzantium, Mecca, etc. It was her purpose to join the most successful with the hope of raising Russian influence and prosperity. Opulence caught her! She was convinced. She made the necessary trip to Byzantium and what interests us is that she was invited to sit in Solomon's chair.[5] In Edward Gibbon's autobiography which was edited and published after his death, he makes one fleeting reference to an early paper he wrote on the rebuilding of Solomon's Temple in which he regrets that he has never been able to find the relative manuscript. I regret it too! Nothing more.

It was shortly after Olga's visit to Constantinople that the city and Church of St Sophia fell to the Muslims and has served ever since as a mosque for their worship. A description of its take-over precludes any possibility of finding Solomon's chair even if it did exist when Olga is supposed to have sat in it.

Now let us move back to Northern Europe. The time is the end of the eighth century when Charles the Great, grandson of the man who stopped the Moors from advancing further through Spain ruled a considerable part of continental Europe. He ruled with an iron hand but achieved great advances. One of the things he did was to

take over a pagan secret court known as the Vehm Court and reorganize it for the advancement of Christianity. [6]

The author of the paper in the Transactions of the Quator Coronati Lodge No 2076, London, of 1906, states there is "No prominent point in Masonry which does not find a counterpoint in Vehm". The court was opened by question and answer. It was important that the court was held on the right day and right time. Seven were the minimum to hold a court. A sword or cable tow was laid on the bench. The author then goes on to give an extract from minutes of Vehm held at Arensburg in 1490:

(The best and truest must be found as jurymen  
The chairman or judge must prove they knew right from wrong  
They must be inducted in closed secret meetings  
They are questioned and must answer - as Carolus Magnus [that is Charles the Great] directed  
They were admonished as to perjury and the punishment to expect  
They must take the oath kneeling on the right knee which has been laid bare. The left hand is laid upon the rope[cable tow used for hanging], two swords laid crosswise.  
Swear to keep secret from wife, child, sand and wind.  
The chairman tells them with covered head, the Vehm secrets  
Tells them the word of distress  
Teaches them the secret salute  
Tells them what belongs to secret and what to open court  
Must pay the chairman 16 schillings and to the scheppen, 8 schillings each)

There were additional requirements. Candidates must be educated and begotten rightly from their father and mother. They must not be prosecuted by any Justice, nor liable to any attainder. They must not be guilty of usury. They must not be a street vagabond, nor a thief, murderer, adulterer, or a blasphemer. They must not have sinned against their country's master or authorities.

There was a severe penalty for breaking the oath. The offender would be arrested, his hands tied behind his back, his tongue drawn out through his neck, with a skewer put through it. Then he was hung seven feet higher than any other evil doer.

It would not be proper to leave your thoughts on this cruel past human history if I did not revert to my original opening and remind you that through all the cruelty of the human race our Order has developed a world wide brotherhood of affection for each other and happiness for many people. All arising from time immemorial when truth and justice were sought by dedicated people, often at great sacrifice.

Perhaps a little more knowledge and pride in our Masonic roots and ancient antecedents is worth our best efforts.

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## REVIEWS OF PAPER PRESENTED TO THE HERITAGE LODGE

May 15, 1991

by

V.W. Bro. Allan J. Cohoe

titled

FROM TIME IMMEMORIAL

**FIRST REVIEW** - was prepared by V.W. Bro. D.W. Clarke.

This reviewer's imagination was quickly stirred by the author's proposition regarding the origin of the concepts contained in the Old Charges. It was maintained by the conversational and provocative style of the text itself.

As stated, "There is nothing new in my paper", supports that old adage, "There is nothing new under the sun". It is the examination from a fresh perspective that often gives new light on an old mystery. Just the fact that the source material is readily available to all Masons enhances the contention; this paper should assist both the gifted and the less gifted Masons along the path of research.

The development of the argument is logical, interesting and easy to follow. We may not agree but we can accept, until otherwise proven, that the Old Charges could have had their source as proposed.

I had a problem with the rather swift dismissal of the religious principles. Its the "chicken and the egg" argument revisited. My difficulty is, "Which came first; who spread what"?

Anyone interested in a differing view might be referred to "A New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry" by Arthur Edward Waite pp. 135-149.

Some intriguing questions arose in this reviewer's mind during the perusal of this essay.

Is there a parallel between some of the problems our fraternity faces today and the decline of the Pythagorean associations when they became involved in "political" ventures.

The word "benign" is interesting. Was the influence gentle, kind and favourable?

Are the three levels of Pythagoras a reflection of his culture and society: are they a reflection of ours?

In summary I would pose one further question. The author has proposed that the Old Charges did not likely arise from nothing and proceeds to suggest a source. Since I have a problem with visions, could there be a source that predates the author's and could his sources have merely been the messenger?

D.W. Clarke

**SECOND REVIEW** - was prepared by W. Bro. Peter M. Floyd, a Charter Member of The Heritage Lodge.

It is my duty to offer criticism of the research paper presented by V.W. Bro. Cohoe, and it is criticism with specific purposes: matters that I consider incorrect or disagree with will be identified. But the more important purpose of the criticism is to draw just a little more information from the respected researcher concerning the subject that he has chosen, and on behalf of everyone, to play the role of the friendly parliamentarian whose question grants the Minister opportunity for more speaking time than he would otherwise, in all good conscience, feel entitled to.

Firstly, we must ask what you mean by the word 'freemasonry', since that definition determines how you should treat your information. You seem to consider everything that is of a civilizing nature as a contribution to masonry, or is your definition more precise?

Secondly, the Old Charges and other references seem to support your claim for the early influence of Pythagoras on our history. I am pleased to agree with that contention.

The reference to fortunes wheel reminds me of the book "Kim" by Rudyard Kipling, the story of a 'Lewis', by a Mason. You will recall that he became for a time the disciple of an aged Bhuddist monk, travelling in search of his salvation and release from 'the wheel'. I wonder if contact by pilgrims with the Bhudda sites of North East India might have occurred from the 6th century B.C. I am told that many ancient carvings from those days represent the Bhudda by a tree, a wheel and a miniature stupa, (small hill). (According to the encyclopedia, the strange stupa cult were 'pre-occupied with human relics', and the stupa represented nirvana, a state of perfect bliss achieved by the soul). Could the wheel, or fortunes wheel, also once have been an obscure allusion to the wheel of reincarnation?

With reference to Boethius, in the difficult life of medieval times sources of consolation must have been helpful. Acceptance of ones fate and hope of a future life beyond the human state must have indeed carried great 'consolation', as promised by his title, "Consolation of Philosophy".

Boethius became noted as a Catholic Theologian, comparable to St. Augustine and was nearly sainted. He was a remarkable individual. But it appears that his prison writings were Platonic, not Christian. I would ask wether we are recognizing Boethius or Plato speaking through Boethius, and to what extent do you consider Platonic philosophy masonic?

The mention of Olga (or Helga) has interesting connotations. She was said to be the first female ruler of Russia, and the first member of their ruling family to adopt Christianity. It is recounted that her husband was assassinated. Olga, later St. Olga, promptly had several hundred people killed and the immediate assassins scalded to death.

Anyway, the chair, or throne, that she allegedly sat in must have been an impressive structure, said to have bulls adorning its arms and supported on lions. Is there not some possibility that there could yet be unidentified fragments somewhere?

Concerning the Vehm (Vee-hemm) Court: I note the aspect that "the best and truest must be found as jurymen". This seems to imply a seeking out of suitable members, rather than an indiscrimi-

nate coming forward of their own free will and accord, and that they were selected before being inducted. The joining method thus differs somewhat from our system.

Black's Law Dictionary, (1968), defines them (with spelling variation), as follows:

"Femgerichte (Feem-Ger-icht) - The name given to certain secret tribunals which flourished in Germany from end of 12th century to middle of 16th, usurping many of the functions of the governments which were too weak to maintain law and order and inspiring dread in all who came within their jurisdiction. Such a court existed in Westphalia (though with greatly diminished powers) until finally suppressed by Jerome Bonaparte."

I would guess that there are parallels to the Star Chamber, which existed in England from the 15th century until abolished in 1641, "characterized by secrecy and often irresponsibly arbitrary and oppressive."

Our Masonry, descending from the Grand Lodge of England, goes to great lengths to avoid accusations of usurping government powers, rather we are supporters of law and order. We are scrupulously careful to notify of the exact meeting times and dates and the summons particulars are always read out to assure exact conformity with the stated purpose. Display of Minutes, Constitution, By-Laws and Charter further emphasize that legality and freedom from sinister purposes and complete conformity with the laws of the land. Tyled meetings - Yes, Secrete meetings - No!. And certainly not secret government powers.

Mention of the severe penalty for violating the Vehm oath reminds of the cruelty of which the human race is capable and also that attitudes to such punishments can change rapidly. For example, the consequences of acts of perceived rebellion, in Canada, in less than 100 years have varied from "a short shrift and a long rope" to a few months holiday in Cuba. No doubt the pendulum will swing back to increased severity quickly enough if a real threat to the country is perceived. And, as with some of the earlier cruel punishments, some will no doubt be administered by Masons who are not doing their duty. So any 'cruel'- 'non cruel' definition must include



masons in both the cruel and un-cruel camps. We therefore cannot always define masons on that basis.

Also, has Masonry really had a gradual growth paralleling the growth of civilization? Or, did it appear in some short interval of time, there being no masonry prior to that and masonry being fully in existence thereafter. For example, "Freemasonry from its origin to the present time, in all its vicissitudes has been the steady, unvarying etc. etc." That suggests that a whole package that was recognizable as masonry existed right from a specific start or origin, nothing gradual about that.

One might not have difficulty with such a concept, based on the examples of various other ethical systems, where some prophet outlines a body of ethics and belief in a short time.

Finally, you gave us the term 'Time Immemorial', and gained our interest, and then adroitly diverted our attention to other matters occurring since then. We are still entitled to ask your opinion of that primeval time. Was it a time of disorder and chaos, or a time of noble savages, or a time when gods and giants and heroes walked on earth, or a time of Divine revelation, etc. etc.

We beg your response to some of the questions and comments suggested by your research and express our appreciation for your interesting and thought provoking paper which has sent us back to the Classics and to a re-examination of the origins of our Craft.

Peter M. Floyd

## RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

by

V.W. Bro. Allan J. Cohoe

I must first thank the commentators for their work on my paper. It is a clarifying experience and assists me to re-think some of my first ideas. I accept any compliments with humility. Any suspicion that I attempt to redraw Freemasonry is denied. There has been no effort on my part to bring Boethius' philosophy into our Order. Ideas

and thoughts which might flow from his words and phrases must be in the mind of the listener or reader.

V.W. Bro. Clarke chides me on the swift dismissal of religious principles. I can only reply that religion as well as politics is not, in my opinion, a subject for a Masonic Lodge. Many religions teach the existence of a Supreme Being, the base from which we operate. Beyond that simple statement they have many variations which can only break up our universal brotherhood if brought into Lodge.

As to the benign influence of the Arabic world, can you imagine where we would be with computers today under Roman numerals. Great human release from drudgery in the banking world which I know well, has come from computers. That is only the latest in numerous benefits. The Arabs seem to have discovered acids and alkalis, the start of immense chemical advantages we all enjoy now.

Finally Bro. Clarke challenges me to pursue further sources into the real origin of these ideas. That is for the next generation of researchers. I suggest Bro. Clarke is an ideal candidate for such work!

W. Bro. Floyd asks me to define Freemasonry. I leave that to each Mason. Change may be necessary to keep up with language changes and human progress otherwise I like it the way it is.

His "wheel of fortune" reference is a valuable addition to our mysterious past which we cannot remember. As the Indo-European language is parent to most Western European languages, the connection is reasonable.

Bro. Floyd's reference to Boethius, Plato and Pythagoras as thought provokers may interest others to go further into this as individuals. I only suggest that from them Freemasonry took what suited the Masons in the formation years and so our Work developed in the 18th century. As we enter the 21st century adjustments may be needed. Some reference to the origins of ideas could be helpful in such work. His comments about Boethius' religious writings reminds me that after introduction of Christianity into the Roman Empire, anyone in places of authority was compelled to give at least lip service to the new religion. Boethius did defend the Roman Church against Arians, Eutychians and Nestorians, who had caused bitter

quarrels between Rome and Byzantium. The resulting death toll amongst some of these free thinkers was terrible.

Solomon's chair, if it was in Constantinople, went through a sacking and pillage by the Crusade of 1202 and annihilation in the Muslim conquest of 1453. The search for it will call for diligence and linguistic skills I lack.

I appreciate Bro. Floyd's peripheral and enriching comments as to conditions which shaped human efforts in various periods mentioned in my paper.

A.J. Cohoe

## THE BEACON-LIGHT

A city set upon a hill,  
Cannot be hid;  
Exposed to every eye, it will,  
Over surrounding plain and vale,  
An influence shed,  
And spread the light of peace afar,  
Or blight the land with horrid war.

Each Mason's lodge is planted so,  
For high display;  
Each is a Beacon-light, to show  
Life's weary wanderers, as they go,  
The better way;  
To show by ties of earthly love,  
How perfect is the Lodge above!

Be this your willing task, dear friends,  
While laboring here;  
Borrow from Him who kindly lends  
The Heavenly Ladder that ascends  
The higher sphere;  
And let the world your progress see,  
Upward, by Faith, Hope, Charity.

Rob Morris\*

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\* *Masonic Odes and Poems* by Rob Morris, published by the Masonic Book Club, 1990.

## OUR DEPARTED BRETHREN

The following names of deceased members of The Heritage Lodge No. 730, G.R.C., have come to our attention during the past year.

### **W. Bro. John R. Castle**

Scarborough  
Sunnyside Lodge No. 582  
Died in February or March, 1989.  
(No details supplied)

### **W. Bro. John Haggeaty**

Shelbourne  
Lorne Lodge No. 377  
Died October 6, 1990.

### **W. Bro. Ralph E. Mercer**

Midhurst  
Kempenfeldt Lodge No. 673  
Died January 21, 1990.

### **V.W. Bro. Bertram F. Wiggins**

Don Mills  
Georgina Lodge No. 343  
Died January 5, 1991.

*Dust to dust, the dark decree -  
Soul to God, the soul is free!  
Leave them with the lowly lain' -  
Brethren, we shall meet again!*

Paraphrased from Rob Morris



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The Deputy Grand Master

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Instituted: September 21, 1977

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